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WHY AMERICAN MARRIAGES FAIL

AND OTHER PAPERS

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BY

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ANNA ALEXANDER ROGERS

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WHY AMERICAN MARRIAGES FAIL

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I

THE STAGE OF THE KNIFE

"We surgeons of the law
do desperate cures, Sir!"

That a large percentage of marriages achieve very little beyond a bare working compromise with happiness is not to be seriously denied. Nor is it to be doubted that there are more matrimonial catastrophes to-day than there were a generation ago. In fact, every recent decade has shown a marked increase in the evil of divorce in the United States,— out of all proportion to the growth of population. It is also a matter of statistics that the evil is growing more rapidly in our country than in Europe. Of course, this preponderance may

be partly accounted for by the greater number of divorce courts on this side of the Atlantic. We have 2921 courts which have the power to grant divorces, as against England's one, Germany's twenty-eight, and France's seventy-nine.

Since during the last fifty years more radical changes by far have come in the social status of women than in that of men, there is a chance that at her door may lie the cause of at least some of this fast-growing social disease. And it is upon that admittedly daring assumption that these few suggestions are based.

There are those who consider that the statistics of divorce represent only an apparent fact, the argument being that this is the age of expression, not suppression. They go on to say that there are few more diseases in the world of to-day than there were in Babylon, but that the wider and more intelligent recognition of disease and the modern differentiation in diagnosis lead to a false impression; that the real differ-

ence lies in the fact that a physician's work is now done in the open; that his discoveries belong to the morning paper; and that our modern life teems with specialists, hospitals, and an ever-enlarging *materia medica*. Medical books and magazines and lectures are more and more accessible to the general public.

In the same way it is claimed that the increasing difficulties in the marriage relation to-day are only apparent; that that question, too, has only just come into the open. The lovers of individualism maintain that it is high time that the enlightened surgery of divorce was resorted to, forgetting that "the significance of the increase of divorce must be sought in its relation to the family and the social order generally, rather than for its bearing on individual morality," still less for its bearing on individual happiness.

To follow the parallel a bit farther, may it not be suggested that, as there is a growing conviction among the best physicians

that the knife is resorted to unnecessarily often to right physical disorders, the same may be true of psychological disorders? Gentler remedies, dietary measures, the daily régime of more intelligent living, have been known to spare more than one patient the horrors of the operating table. In fact, is not prevention the only genuine modern miracle? Toward that great end surely come all the physical sciences, all social philanthropies and philosophies, bringing in outstretched hands their gifts to suffering humanity!

Three "instances" come uppermost: (1) Woman's failure to realize that marriage is her work in the world. (2) Her growing individualism. (3) Her lost art of giving, replaced by a highly developed receptive faculty.

First: Marriage is woman's work in the world — not man's. From whatever point it is viewed, physical or spiritual, as a question of civic polity or a question of individual ethics, it is her specific share of the

world's work—first, last, and always ; allotted to her by laws far stronger than she is. And the woman who fails to recognize this and acknowledge it has the germ of divorce in her veins at the outset.

Moonlit and springtime moods all to the contrary, the fact remains that marriage is not a man's work, but one of his dearest delusions, from which he parts begrudgingly. Moreover, it is not even necessary to him in the accomplishment of those things which *are* his work. It is generally no more than his dream of prolonging through years a humanly improbable condition. Happiness as a husband and father has always been his scarcely whispered prayer, his dearest secret hope, toward which all his idealism yearns. That numerous other and very potent motives enter into men's hearts is not in the least overlooked; it is only claimed that to the average man his future marriage is little more than a very beautiful dream.

But the wife who insists childishly upon

treating marriage, either in theory or in practice, as a beautiful dream, is forgetful of how very little is left of earnest life-work for a woman if she repudiates the dignified *duty* of wedlock placed upon her shoulders. Why should she not be taught the plain fact that no other work really important to the world has ever been done by a woman since "the morning of the world"? Only as a woman, with all that that entails upon her, is she alone, preëminent, unapproachable. And yet apparently her whole energy is to-day bent upon dethroning herself!

Men, at this stage of civilization, are not only the world's workers, breadwinners, home-builders, fighters, supporters of all civic duties, — they are also the world's idealists. All else is mere quibbling!

Whatever the future may develop, up to the present time no great religion, deserving the name, has ever been founded by a woman; no vital discovery in science ever made by her; no important system of phi-

losophy ; no code of laws either formulated or administered. Nor along the supposedly more feminine lines of human development has, as yet, any really preëminent work come from her. Upon literature, music, sculpture, painting, women have as yet made very few enduring marks. As to her recent small successes at self-support, however to be commended and encouraged, they do not lead to any big end outside of herself or her immediate surroundings ; her purposes are personal and ephemeral.

The poets are responsible for much of the present feminine megalomania, but modern scientists are effectively reducing the swelling, as it were ; which may lead to a generally healthier social condition all around the family circle. In estimating the secondary differences between men and women, Havelock Ellis's interesting summary of what recent scientific research has so far accomplished states several facts that are markedly contrary to the general drift of unscientific opinion : —

"As regards the various senses . . . the balance of advantage on the side of women is less emphatically on their side than popular notions would have led us to expect. The popular belief is really founded on the confusion of two totally distinct nervous qualities: sensibility and irritability — or as it is perhaps better called, affectability; women having greater irritability, men deeper sensibility."

Galton, the pioneer in accurate study of the sensory differences between man and woman, remarks: "I found as a rule that men have more delicate powers of discrimination than women, and the business experience of life seems to confirm this."

Two of Ellis's more homely illustrations tend to support this view: "It is worthy of note that pianoforte tuners are usually men"; and, "men have a monopoly of the higher walks of culinary art; women are not employed in such occupations as tea-tasting, which requires specially delicate discrimination; they are rarely good con-

noisseurs of wine; and while *gourmandes* are common, the more refined expression *gourmet* does not even possess a feminine form."

The few foregoing suggestions are offered in refutation of the present false and demoralizing deification of women, especially in this country, an idolatry of which we as a people are so inordinately proud. One of the evil effects of this attitude is shown in the intolerance and selfishness of young wives, which is largely responsible for the scandalous slackening of marriage ties in the United States. Every stranger coming within our gates is amazed at the social domination of the female in our country, the subordination to her and her wishes of the hard-working, self-effacing male.

An extreme antithesis to this American woman-worship is of course to be found in England; and a picture comes to mind full of grim humor — a typical John Bull, deep magenta complexion, Pickwickian in figure, as sure of himself as the sun itself,

the entirely joyless parent of four grown daughters. They stood in line before the counter in a silk shop in Italy. Four lengths of the same dull elderly shade of purple were measured off and paid for by the Great Briton; the four Britonesses stood helpless, voiceless, exchanging sly glances of bitter disappointment and disgust. They were asked no questions, hence they were as dumb as the beasts of the field. Once papa remarked with resounding complacence: —

"A good wearing shade, my dears."

"Oh, yes, papa!" returned the spiritless chorus.

Papa gave each one her bundle, whereupon she said, "Thank you, papa!" And then he led the way pompously, and the five filed out, the narrow, broken-hearted shoulders of the girls drooping more than ever. The big brilliant eyes of the Italian clerk met those of the writer, an international smile was exchanged, and he exploded into two words: —

"Barbare! Sauvage!"

But that some middle ground between these poor abject English girls and our equally abject American fathers and husbands may be discovered, is not despaired of in this age of many and sudden changes.

It is contended (not without a decent show of timidity!) that in marriage, more often than not, the man is the idealist, however far he himself falls short of his own standards. Witness his inevitable dislike for and impatience of the whole barbaric display of a public wedding — that senseless whirl of grossly material things in which women revel. "What has it all to do with you, and our love, our happiness?" What wife has not stored away somewhere in her memory words like these, pleaded in a lover's voice? And the chances are that the woman called him selfish, and swore prettily that she reveled in "such vile matter," so she be "fairly bound."

The average wife who manages to live, *after* a marriage for love, up to the aver-

age husband's ideal of her *before* marriage, will, it is safe to say, reach her highest spiritual development. She need not aspire to any higher goal than the poor man's own illusions! The real trouble is that they are rather likely to prove uncomfortably exalted.

In fact, to preserve his ideal of her — just the average busy man — is really her life-work. Hers, somehow, by hook or by crook, to save out of the inevitable strife of those early days of character reconstruction, at least a workable armistice; some sort of a broad friendship which leaves room for human frailties; to cultivate a habit of reasonable concession; a motherly wish to be a source of harmony to her husband; and an honest determination to arrest the disease of "incompatibility" (latent always) in its incipiency, long years before it reaches the stage of the knife; to rise a little above the primitive frankness of a certain colored wife who admitted nonchalantly, — "Oh, yes, I done left 'im!"

"Wha' for you done left 'im?" she was asked. "Oh, I jes' natch'ully los' all taste fo' 'im!" Which explanation, crude as it is, would cover the cause of an astonishing number of divorces in this year of grace 1907.

II

GROWTH OF INDIVIDUALISM

"My sweet, my own — Myself!"

THE rock upon which most of the flower-bedecked marriage barges go to pieces is the latter-day cult of individualism; the worship of the brazen calf of Self.

It is admittedly not easy to remember that our lives are only important as integral parts of a big social system. Especially difficult is it for a woman to be made to realize this, because her whole life hitherto has been generally an experiment in individualism; whereas a man's, since the first primitive times, has become more and more an experiment in communism. The inborn rampant *ego* in every man has found its wholesome outlet in hard work, generally community-work, which further keeps down his egoism; whereas the devouring *ego* in the "new woman" is as yet largely

a useless, uneasy factor, vouchsafing her very little more peace than it does those in her immediate surcharged vicinity.

Nowadays she receives almost a man's mental and muscular equipment in school or college, and then at the age of twenty she stops dead short and faces a world of — negatives! No exigent duties, no imperative work, no manner of expending normally her highly-developed, hungry energies. That they turn back upon her and devour her is not to be wondered at. One is reminded of that irresistible characterization: "Alarm-clock women that buzz for a little and then run down."

And so it comes to pass that this highly trained, well-equipped (and also ill-equipped) feminine *ego* faces wifehood — the one and only subject about which she is persistently kept in the dark. And from the outset she fails to realize, never having been taught it, that what she then faces is not a brilliant presentation at the Court of Love, not a dream of ecstasy and triumph,

not even a lucky and comfortable life-billet —she is facing her work at last! her difficult, often intensely disagreeable and dangerous, life-task. And her salary of love will sometimes be only partly paid, sometimes begrudgingly, sometimes not at all, —very rarely overpaid, — by either her husband or her children. One of the precise facts that young women should be taught, as they are taught physical geography, is that men, all men, have their high and low emotional tides, and a good wife is the immovable shore to her husband's restless life.

It would appear that the indiscriminate and undigested education of the female masses and classes is depriving us Americans of good servants and of good wives at once. They are all "above their station!"

The really small percentage of unmarried women who have the blessing of paid work of any sort in their lives (as an absolute necessity against starvation) are of

the elect, and of course know it not! The rest must wait for matrimony, if modest; struggle for it, if not. And then all this unexpended feminine egoism, joined with unexpended physical energy, demands from the normally expended masculine egoism far more of everything than he is at all prepared to give, far more than she has any just claim to demand. More of his love, more admiration, more time, more money — she wants more of them all to satisfy her recently discovered Self. Ask the first girl of twenty who presents herself, let her be the average badly educated, restless, pampered, passionate, but shallow-natured maiden of the day, — superb in physique, meagre in sentiment, — and note her answer as to what she demands (not hopes for!) of her probable husband, quite irrespective of what he may get in return.

He must be a god physically (that seems to be the modern American girl's *sine qua non*); he must have wealth, brains, education, position, a perfect temper, and a lim-

itless capacity to adore her, kneeling. And he, poor soul, after the first exigent mood, which soon passes, wants very little more than peace and a place to smoke unmolested; combined preferably with a guaranteed blindness to his general faults and particular fads. A recent public vote on this subject actually resulted in a stronger poll for "sweet temper" than for any other masculine prerequisite in a wife.

In a broader aspect American women are as a whole pampered and worshiped out of all reason, a condition which is sometimes found in young civilizations. In even a brief comparison with the same class in other countries, it will be found that our women as a whole do not deserve it. In France the proportion of wage-earning women is thirty-four per cent of the wage-earning population; in the United States it is only seventeen per cent. In France the working-women form eighteen per cent of the population, compared with six per cent in this country. Further, they do not

render the conscientious careful personal domestic service of the German women; nor the financial support of French wives, and intelligent helpfulness in commercial as well as domestic affairs. How many American husbands could seriously advise with their wives on the subject of business and expect even comprehension, let alone sound business advice? An astonishing number of French women of all classes are in commercial matters the gifted "silent partners" of their husbands, however loquacious in social doings. The painstaking thrift of European women has no parallel in this country; nor the painstaking cleanliness that is a revelation to American eyes accustomed to the general "slouch" from one end of the United States to another. It has been said of the much-maligned Italians that only among the Chinese can be found a parallel to their almost tragic economies. Half of Italy could live on what New York City alone throws away in a year. In England, too, every intelligent

woman understands politics, would be ashamed not fully to comprehend the measures before Parliament; and during election times she works with the energy of a ward politician for the man or idea that has won the right to her loyalty. Then, too, she lives more in other people's lives than we do. Each woman feels her obligation to give much of her energy to an endless detail of philanthropic work in her immediate neighborhood.

On the other hand very much more philanthropic work is done in this country, outside of the churches, than in England, but it is managed on a broader, less personal basis. In fact, it is left to twenty clear-headed, business-like women to do the work which is divided among two thousand of her English sisters. This is precisely what the writer wishes to prove, — the general idleness and self-centredness of the average American woman, and her unproved claim to be worshiped.

One very salient difference strikes the

American traveler in walking before noon about any of, say, four European cities, London, Paris, Berlin, or Vienna. It may be summed up in the exclamation, "Why, where are the women?" An Italian friend fighting his way along Washington Street in Boston, walking, not on the sidewalk, which was a solid immovable congestion of femininity, but on the cobblestones of the narrow street, was heard to gasp, "The Public is here a common noun of the feminine gender!" He on his side wondered where the men were. The whole world of women in the city, and from its suburbs, apparently, betakes itself to the shops every day, between nine o'clock and twelve. Shops are stifling, street-cars jammed, sidewalks impassable. This is more or less true of shopping districts in all cities all over the United States.

This phenomenon represents several truths: we are prosperous; our men never "shop"; and as a people our women dress far beyond their incomes, the men remain-

ing singularly negligent in their dress. Our sense of proportion in money expenditure has not yet properly developed; that only comes in a more advanced stage of civilization.

On a morning walk an English woman said to the writer, in one of our western cities especially given over to the national passion for dress, "Any countrywoman of mine dressed as that woman is, or that, or that, would be in her carriage. She would return to a substantial home, the door would be opened by a man in livery, every item of her environment would match the elegance of those furs, that frightfully expensive hat, that very smart broadcloth walking suit. Whereas the chances are (you see I've been keeping my eyes open!) that she came in a street-car, and will go home in one; she lives either in tiny lodgings, — I beg your pardon, flat! — and will open her front door with a pass-key; or else she lives in one of the suburban towns, in a very trumpery sort of little house, which does

not in the least match those furs nor that hat! And a slovenly 'slavey' attends the door when she rings for admittance —"

"Or what is much more likely, her daughter or her mother," added the American.

The main cause of this daily submergence of our streets by the feminine world is not mere vanity, for the industrious, home-staying French women have that quality to an even greater and much more insidious degree. It seems to be a combination of excessive energy and sheer idleness of purpose, and the national vice of extravagance.

The writer has taken the time and pains to follow, more than once, several typical American women on a typical morning shopping tour, and has discovered the anomaly that the longer they take to shop, the less they actually buy! And these idlers are not the well-dressed prosperous women, — they are the poorly clad, pale and irritable from fatigue. From counter to counter they go, fingering, pricing, commenting,

passing on, hour after hour. Sometimes an ice-cream soda in the basement is their only lunch, followed by a complete rearrangement of hair in the "Ladies Parlor"; then a slow stroll through the "Art Department," and they remark casually to any one who will listen, "Well, I guess it's about time to go home!" One involuntarily wonders about that "home"! These facts are true of tens of thousands of our women in every city in the Union; and much travel has failed to discover their exact equivalent anywhere else in the world.

These facts mean a big economic loss somewhere in our development. All the writer cares to claim is that our women as a whole are spoiled, extremely idle, and curiously undeserving of the maudlin worship that they demand from our hard-working men.

That the higher-class women waste their time in equal measure is still more easy of proof. They crowd the smarter shops, bent on the American worship of "Everything

Ready-made"; matinées are packed with solidly feminine audiences. The hairdressers', the manicurists', the cafés at lunch-time, are full to overflowing with women — extravagant, idle, self-centred. Moreover, the always small class of so-called society women, *per se*, works harder and during longer hours in their pursuit of pleasure than any other women in our country. They must perforce live by some sort of regulation and economy of energy to remain in the running at all.

Of course there are capable, earnest, industrious specimens of beautiful womanhood in every city, town, or village in the land, who make not only good wives and mothers, but who are leaders in philanthropic work, and often also retain their social preëminence by a careful apportioning of their time and vitality. These exceptions serve to emphasize the unworthiness of the woman who strives but to

"live and breathe and die
A rose-fed pig in an æsthetic sty!"

She has not merged her fate with her husband's if married, nor with her father's if not; she does not properly supplement their lives, she is striving for a detached profitless individuality. I emphasize this, for the fact that men are selfish, and vicious, and "desperately wicked," has been so thoroughly exploited, that the preference given to a less acknowledged economic situation may perhaps be pardoned.

III

"Wifehood is thought great in India in proportion to its giving, not receiving." — Sister Nevedita.

In India an affection which asks for an equal return, so many heartbeats for a like number, is called "shop-keeping." Among us Westerners this Eastern exalted faculty of giving affection and not looking for any equable exchange of commodities, has degenerated into a sort of passion for sentimental bargains!

Unfortunately, there are no genuine psychic bargains thrown out on life's counter. The really good spiritual things cost the most, as do the material things. Success in any undertaking, even marriage, is always both shy and obstinate, and hides behind quite a thorny hedge of persistence, hard work, unselfishness, and above all, patience, a quality, now gone out of fashion, which made of our grandmothers civilizing centres of peace and harmony; for

they were content to use slow curative measures to mend their matrimonial ailments, and the "knife" was looked upon with horror. One finds so often in the women of that generation a strange quiet as of wisdom long digested; a deep abiding strength; an aloofness of personality that makes for dignity; sweet old faces that bear the marks of "love's grandeur." What is there to-day in all this fret and fuss and fury of feminine living, that compares with the power for good of these wonderful old women, fast disappearing?

We, of our day, on the contrary, hear much of such things as these: "Out upon your patience! If patience had not gone out of us women, we should still be sold in the market-places! From it were welded our chains, and the whole ignominy of the past."

There is really only one serious objection to this sort of talk — it is not true. The abolition of all forms of slavery that the world has ever seen began in some

man's brain, working from above down, not from beneath up! No great united action of women has led to their gradual emancipation. Big changes such as that have always been born in some man's big soul, an entirely impersonal masculine ideality working slowly toward the general good.

Girls are capable of great patience, energy, and persistence in the acquisition of education or what are known as accomplishments. And later on in life, if women, bent on social success, were as easily discouraged, as exacting, as irritable in the accomplishment of that task, as they often are in the undertaking of marriage, the list of the world's successful salons would indeed be a brief one. There is no doubt that the women of the day have the qualities that would make for success, even in marriage, if they elected to expend them in these commonplace ways.

But the present excessive education of young women, and excessive physical cod-

dling (the gymnastics, breathing exercises, public and private physical culture, the masseurs, the manicurists, the shampooers) have produced a curious anomalous hybrid: a cross between a magnificent, rather unmannerly boy, and a spoiled, exacting, *demi-mondaine*, who sincerely loves in this world herself alone. Thus quite a new relationship between the sexes has arisen, a slipshod unchivalrous companionship, which before marriage they nominate "good form," but which after marriage they illogically discover to be cause for tears or for temper.

Two winters ago an old-fashioned woman who had lived in many lands chaperoned a party of well-bred, decidedly "smart" American young people, bent upon examining into some of the larger settlement workings of New York City. During a long evening entailing much walking and crossing of crowded streets, the girls strode along as detached and independent as if it were broad daylight, and they quite

friendless. They crossed the bustling avenues, climbed in and out of cars, and never one masculine hand raised to help, nor voice to guide. The effect of such almost brutal discourtesy was startling indeed to the older woman, who had for years been out of touch with young America. One generation had brought this painful change about. Whose new ideal of sex-relation was this? Before the evening was over illumination came.

"Will you be good enough to give me your hand as I get out of the car? I 'm accustomed to it," finally said the woman of a past generation in a decidedly unamiable tone.

The young man's hand went out willingly at the next stop, and in a low voice he said, with a sigh and a smile: —

"It's a comfort to be with a woman once more who wants such a thing! I hope you 'll pardon me, but it's not our fault. The girls snub us, you know, and say it's the worst possible form, and all that; and

yet the fellows would all like to do little things like that for women — I know I should! It seems as if the girls were snubbing one of our most decent instincts, don't you know — but — well, you see how it is! My mother always taught me that manners were but morals wearing their best bonnets and gowns."

Is it to be wondered at that the indefinable charm, the sacredness and mystery of womanhood are fast passing away from among us? When women themselves set the standard of conduct lower down; when they consider it a *gaucherie* to blush, shyness a laughable anachronism, sentiment "sickening nonsense," courtesy "bad form," is it cause for wonder that a few months after marriage a girl so often finds her husband disillusioned and in an ugly reactionary mood? Finding also herself stung into a fury of disappointment and resentment at his want of that same instinctive tenderness and courtesy which she had repulsed before marriage, and which now,

when it is too late, she not only longs for, but demands!

"If women thought less of their own souls and more about men's tempers, marriage would n't be what it is," wrote a recent feminine philosopher. There are several facts about the masculine character of which women will do well to realize the immutability. It makes not one particle of difference what the wife expects or demands in marriage, whether she gives freely or begrudgingly, if for any reason whatsoever a man does not find his home happy, — or at least peaceful, — whether it be her fault or his, — the chances are that he will close his lips, put on his hat, and go his brutal way — elsewhere! He may seek distraction among other men, in a frenzy of work or pleasure — and he may not.

Of one thing the young wife may be sure, that a man has neither the instinct nor the time to coddle his disappointments in marriage — *he puts on his hat!*

This is his universal, silent, unlabeled argument, that the happiness of that home is not his business, but hers. If the fault is his, the brute expects patience; if it's hers, he expects self-control. If neither is forthcoming — well, that is her lookout! He wanted to be happy, he expected it, or else he would not have married her.

Under all of this selfish shunting of the responsibility of home-happiness on to the woman's shoulders, lies a deep justifying truth, — it *is* her business, — and the fact that some of nature's laws, such as gravitation, are at times extremely irritating, does not, however, make them inoperative.

Let the fault be his or hers, the main source of trouble lies in the undue development of youthful individualism. That the fault is generally hers, is of course not for a moment implied; but as the great French pessimist, in a mild mood, suggests, "Quarrels would not last long if the fault was only on one side."

On his side, nine times out of ten in this country, a man marries for love. Of course he idealizes her, and is absolutely sure that she is going to make him happy. Surely the greatest source of peril to the young wife lies in the distorted vision of her bridegroom's eyes, blinded by a passion for perfection! It would indeed be heaven if love's lens were after all the only just one, instead of being generally the most untrue!

The man's motives, if selfish, are generally as pure as are consistent with faulty humanity. At least he considers them a fair basis for a happy marriage; and he also thinks that, if he stays true and steadfast and sober, and clothes and feeds his wife, he has done his part. That he wants to continue loving her and being beloved, wants happiness, goes without saying; was it not nominated in the bond?

He is perfectly amazed when some strange, obscure element suddenly intrudes and turns his, as well as her, melody into

discord ; blackens his, as well as her, ideal. He is helpless, bewildered, frantic, —

> "Lest we lose our Edens,
> Eve and I!"

On the young wife's part, she has been brought up in ignorance of a man's make-up, of his latent brutalities in which is rooted his very strength to bear the burdens of life. Unprepared, undisciplined, uncounseled, impatient of a less thing than godhood itself, she often refuses even to try to adjust the yoke to her inexperienced shoulders, and more and more often throws it off, glorying in the assertion of her "persistent self." She has not been told that perfection does not exist; that the yoke of imperfection is laid on every pair of shoulders, his as well as hers ; that no wife celebrates her golden wedding, smiling and content under her gray hair, who has not her secret history of struggle, bitter disappointment, loneliness, jealousy, physical and mental agony. It is safe to say that

she also did not marry an angel, for the very simple reason that there are none — male or female — in the whole wide world. But she was blessed with that "passion of great hearts," patience, and she has been victorious in the battle of life, — the battle that we are all fighting, every one; not this weeping wife here, nor that one there, nursing her wrath.

"It is better to face the fact, and know, when you marry, that you take into your life a creature of equal, if of unlike, frailties, whose weak human heart beats no more tunefully than your own." The engineer of a train must have learned well his business before he is allowed to assume the responsibility of the levers. How much knowledge of the even more complicated physical and moral levers of marriage do the average young people bring to bear upon their life-problem?

Happily many of the colleges for women have commenced to recognize the wisdom of introducing the study of the

family, and the statistics of sociology. It would seem that such a chair should be filled by a woman holding the degree of motherhood and wifehood, whatever else she may have picked up of human knowledge. And even then, with all that undoubtedly could be taught our young women along these lines, it is but a preparation; there is the test ahead of them all, when they will need the wisdom that only life itself can slowly and painfully teach.

Somewhere before the benediction of the marriage ceremony might well be inserted Amiel's beautifully cadenced words to women facing their great life-work: "Never to tire, never grow cold; to be patient, sympathetic, tender; to look for the budding flower and the opening heart; to hope always; like God to love always, — this is duty."

SOME FAULTS OF AMERICAN MEN

SOME FAULTS OF AMERICAN MEN

I

"It is a law of this universe, that the best things shall be seldomest seen in their best form." — *The Stones of Venice.*

PERHAPS it might be more definitive to speak of the shortcomings of American men, of their negative faults. These are, after all, the specifically national ones. The positive faults belong to the sex irrespective of nationality, and form too large a subject for such small handling as this. Furthermore, ever since Moses selected a negative phrasing when he hammered out the ten great moral laws, the world, with unconscious humor, has gone on listing a man's virtues negatively. We say: he does not drink; he does not gamble; he is nothing of a Lovelace. But his faults re-

main positive: "he is a thief," we say, rather than "he is not honest," which somehow sounds euphemistic, and breeds instant doubt of the entire truth of the statement. Perhaps, too, because of their less complex make-up, their tendency to fall by themselves as it were, into classified types, one really gets a rough picture of the men thus negatively described. One likes or dislikes them on even such slight hearsay.

And yet what number of negations will ever convey the slightest idea of a woman? What availeth it to learn of her that she does not drink, is not given to habitual profanity? Even when the praise goes to excess, and we learn that she is not a gadabout, nor does she throw anything large or hard at her husband's head, we are still left in doubt concerning her attractiveness as a companion for either an hour or a lifetime. That a woman's virtues are still summed up positively, in face of much internal opposition to sex-

differentiation of any sort, is a tribute to a difference of standard, which she should be the last to quarrel with, had she wisdom, instead of only a little learning. It also stands for the woman's greater complexity, in which lies half of her power in the world. It requires finer lines to limn her as an individual.

So we will keep (prayerfully!) to the sins of American masculine omission.

To begin with a caution bred of some experience with American complacency, it were as well to recognize at once that geographic isolation is largely responsible for the picture of supreme contentment with themselves which the men of this country present to the humbled beholder. We doubtless have inherited some of it with our British blood, but there still remains much that is stamped in clear lettering, "made in America." From a purely artistic point of view, it is a pity to try to disturb, even for an instant, a national pose so full of boyish optimism

in a world largely given over to unsightly regret, humiliation, and despair. But as it is not yet universally admitted that the foremost ship of the millennium has already reached our golden shores, and as a whole nation's self-illusions have been known to vanish in one day and one night; and upon the bare chance that this may again happen, either in smoke literal or smoke metaphorical, may not a little of our own Yankee farsightedness be suggested — and pardoned — once in a way?

This American complacency embraces that citizen himself, as he sees himself; his wife (especially his wife) as he sees her; his children, if perchance he takes time to remember that he has any; his system of government, unless the ogre known as the Other Party is in power, when the citizen is more critical; his country at large and all that therein is, from finance to watermelons. Like a Turk, he is particularly enamored of size in the harem of his affections.

"The great quality of Dulness is to be unalterably contented with itself," quoth Thackeray; but he was not writing of American human nature, nor are our men in the least dull. They have only been too long geographically removed from any just comparison with other civilized nations; and, what is more to the point, too absorbed mentally with domestic issues to bridge the seas with their minds, if not with their bodily senses, to learn that there are other points of view than our own, equally civilized, if not always more "advanced."

What the busy American citizen sees of those least worthy specimens of other nations who are so rashly welcomed to our shores, only serves further to enhance his own self-satisfaction. But is not that a little like judging one's host by spending the evening in his kitchen?

To offset in a measure this mental provincialism, would it not be possible to introduce in our more advanced grades, in

all of our schools, the serious study of the criticisms of the United States written by the enlightened and just foreigners who have not always flattered us? We are surely in no further exigent need of flattery, much as our appetite remains childishly keen for such sweet relish. The habit instilled early of standing back from one's nation, and judging coolly between right and wrong, wisdom and fallacy, can hurt no patriotism worthy the name. "The strength of criticism lies only in the weakness of the thing criticised," said one of our own great men.

If we wish to be treated as a nation of grown men among the world's opposed armies of men, there is no better strategy than to find out exactly how our enemy (commercial, political, military) estimates us. There has been more than one great general who has found success along that line, and laid his plans of offense or defense accordingly. Surely the time for "baby talk" has passed, young as we still

obviously are. There are many valuable books written by clear-sighted aliens, criticising, not abusing, us as a people, socially, politically, economically, which might serve to shake this dangerous self-satisfaction, and open young American eyes to the fact that perfection itself has not yet quite been attained; there remains much to be done before we are what we think, or pretend to think, that we are. There is left a lot of plain, old-fashioned, everlasting human blundering going on here in the United States, as well as elsewhere in the world, now as from the beginning.

The just, temperate criticisms of our want of ideality, of beauty, of repose, by the great English critic Matthew Arnold (equally severe with his own people) would serve to clear the atmosphere of mirage, to give one or two illustrations of what is meant. The careful reading of Hugo Münsterberg's estimate of us is doubly valuable: first, because much of it was not primarily written for our eyes; second,

because it is distinctly sympathetic, and the Sun succeeded in doing what the Wind failed to do in the shrewd old fable. One of the wisest Americans of the last half-century, whom the writer had the honor of knowing, once was heard to reply to a query: "No, never read antagonistic biography — it is a pure waste of time! An estimate to be absolutely just, must be in greater part sympathetic." He went on to compare the value of the first part of Bourrienne's "Life of Napoleon," when he was in favor with his master, with the last part, when Napoleon no longer playfully pinched his quondam secretary's cheeks.

As our average men are admittedly not readers of books, however many newspapers and magazines they may devour, the writer proposes to quote and to paraphrase, for the sake of brevity, from Münsterberg's "American Traits," especially from the chapter on "Education."

II

"There was never before a nation that gave the education of the young into the hands of the lowest bidder."— HUGO MÜNSTERBERG.

THIS trenchant sentence was written of our educational system within ten years. It is based upon the fact that three-fourths of American education is in the hands of women, who are able to underbid the men by the very conditions of their being. Few of them are — what the average man is when he has reached the age when he is fitted to teach — the sole supporters of growing families; and hence they are willing to work for smaller salaries, thereby slowly driving the men from teaching as a paying profession. It was the business of male teachers to remain in the ranks and keep there their dominance, as in other nations which have grown great. If there were nothing more vital to the commonwealth than the distribution of the

$200,000,000 yearly spent in education in this country, then perhaps we might readily comprehend and sympathize with the present attitude toward this serious matter. But to make that very secondary question the prime consideration is to lose sight altogether of the object of this vast expenditure.

Surely it is not to furnish honest support to a given number of needy women (worthy as that plea may be), women who have their full share of American snobbishness about working with their hands as a means of support. Is not the real object to get the best, broadest, sanest teachers for the children of the nation?

A civilization is indeed crude that is all eyes for the salary, with only a side-glance for the work to be performed in return.

Our distribution of the salaries of teachers in this country simply places a premium on the celibate spirit, exactly as Rome has for centuries. As a result, Italy to-day has difficulty in finding men to do

her work. Some day we may be in equal need of men to be what men ought to be — the social backbone of the nation in all the ramifications of what is called civilization.

It is into the female celibate hands that our men have suffered the greater part of the education of their children to drift. It is a note of warning to our civilization, that cannot be too often repeated, this rapid "womanizing," as Münsterberg calls it, of almost the entire education of the American youth.

Is this complete *bouleversement* of sex-conditions so very much nearer the wise economic balance kept by the older nations of civilized Europe than the Eastern conditions where the men draw the curtains of the harem across all such vexing questions? Are our own men, after all, driven by overwork rather than by their senses, slowly reverting to that convenient condition of home affairs: "I haven't time, go ask your mother"? If that sentence was

overheard anywhere on earth, would the speaker's nationality remain long in doubt, however free from colloquialism his accent?

That young American women stand abreast of men, even very often ahead of them, in college work, represents nothing important save to the most superficial vision. It simply stamps the nature of that work in American colleges. Nor does the fact that women make apparently good teachers settle the question satisfactorily. As our German critic gently puts it: "The work, which in all other civilized countries is done by men, cannot in the United States be slipped into the hands of women without being profoundly altered in character." And again: "If the entire culture of the nation is womanized, it will be in the end weak and without decisive influence on the progress of the world."

No poetical claim of idealizing their women, of having the utmost confidence

in their judgment, will remove from American men the plain stigma of shirking the burdens borne by the men of all other civilized peoples; shirking them for what, up to the present time, have seemed to them of more importance — questions of government and of the practical development of primitive conditions. And yet it was Wendell Phillips who wrote, "Education is the only interest worthy of the deep, controlling anxiety of the thoughtful man."

As the future of our republic is rooted in the average intelligence of the people, it is difficult to watch with patience the turning over of the mental training of our children to a sex profoundly dominated by the emotions.

Even a young and daring nation cannot fight the laws of nature, and "Nature cannot be dodged." She makes always for differentiation of function, not for empty repetitions of potentiality among species. The man has his, the woman

hers, and our faulty system of education calls aloud for man's reinstated attention, his profoundest thought.

In this country, "the whole higher culture is feminized." Eighty-five per cent of the patrons of theatres are women, says our critic. Women are the readers of our books, they make up an American audience at public lectures, concerts. They control our charities and church work. In Europe at least one-half of the people present at an art exhibition are men; in this country one sees *less than five per centum* of men present at such an exhibition, by actual count. The germ of feminization is firmly planted in the whole national intellectuality, until now woman has the practical monopoly. The purely native resources of our nation and our politics remain in the hands of men;—it is about all they have retained, and the suffragists begrudge them even that.

III

THE responsibility for the present humiliating slave-trade in which rich American girls are sold to the titled decadents of England and the Continent is almost wholly the fault of the men of this country. This opinion is offered only after years of observation and consideration of our social conditions, and after a pathological study of American men. Their open astonishment and chagrin at this phenomenon would be vastly amusing were it not so pathetic. Our men have a helpless inability to see themselves. Nor is the responsibility of the mother lost sight of, for the foreign suitor begins with her, as he does in Europe. She is the outer citadel which must first succumb to his studied charm.

This outer citadel is carried with astonishing ease, as he quickly discovers, and for three reasons. The mother is easily

dazzled; her social foundations do not go down deep in the class to which she almost invariably belongs; her husband has made every dollar of the lure of those millions, without which there would not be this problem to solve. Second, the women who see what a given man really is, who estimate him at all justly, who begin even to understand men's social standards in this country or in Europe, are rare indeed. The American mother is clearly out of her depth at the start, as unfit as a child to counsel her daughter. She is not equipped for it. It is not her work. In the third place, that subtle relationship of sex which European men of any age always have the art of establishing with a woman of whatever age: their attention, their quick courtesy toward women, their habit of listening absorbedly when a woman speaks,—all this is so absolutely new to the American mother that she becomes hypnotized by it, and can no longer distinguish truth from falsity, or a mere

national point of etiquette from a personal thoughtfulness and delicate tenderness of feeling.

She, poor soul, at the age most sensitive to flattery, is hungry for a little consideration. When it comes from this foreigner, unhappily there has been nothing in her past like it to help her to see through it to its core. On the contrary, she has been so long used to being treated as a social incumbrance, snubbed, interrupted, unconsidered by all of her daughter's domestic suitors, that to separate principles from manners, without the aid of her husband, who "leaves it all to her," in the old, honored American way, is to demand impossibilities of her.

And he, the father? He is so used to the bees flying to and fro about his flower, he is so absolutely absorbed body and soul in his work, he has for so long shunted all such things off on his wife, that he only wakes up and "gets mad," as the saying is, when it is too late.

Then the astonishment of the thoughtless father and the selfish brother and the discarded, discourteous American suitor, are about equally divided. Any conception that they are in any way responsible for it, never enters their minds. The mother is unjustly blamed for the whole thing. Nor do they withhold the "I told you so," when the cruel ending comes, as it so often does. As if any mother, even a parvenue American, would have encouraged the suit of the foreigner, if she had not erred in her judgment of men.

After all, though the United States may be the girl's paradise, it distinctly is not the mother's. For she must carry the load alone, all but the monetary providing,—alone from the day of the child's birth to the day her boy kisses her lightly good-by, and goes on his way which she alone, not his weary, absent-minded father, helped him to select.

She carries her daughter, from babyhood, through all of her school-life (what number of American fathers know even

the name of their daughters' day-schools, or had any part in the selection?) to the day when she too, unterrified through ignorance, opens the door of her own life and goes out hand-in-hand with some unknown man. More than one American mother has told the writer of her weariness in struggling alone with such responsibilities,—"a mother and yet husbandless."

The American masculine claim of absorption in his work does not in the least justify such a condition. Frenchmen support their wives and still find time to go shopping with them too! Englishmen do likewise, and find energy left to place their sons in school, energy to watch keenly the love-affairs of their daughters, unhesitatingly bidding this or that man be gone; moral courage and physical vitality left after the day's work to be in fact, as well as in fancy, "the head of the house." They have the wisdom to leave hours for play, for pure boyishness of living. And all this may be observed in the same middle

class that with us turns the whole issue over to the wife, expecting of her all wisdom, though knowing her sheltered youth; and all vitality, to run unceasingly and unaided the whole machinery of the family. No wonder our women have "nerves"! No wonder they are becoming more and more restless (one of the first evidences of strain), more and more discontented as time passes. Masculine kindness to our women is sometimes so tangled up with selfishness that there need be no surprise that there is some confusion regarding them.

Not that our men want the money, after which they are striving, for themselves, for their pleasures. They do not. They are almost notoriously generous. Our rich men give, give, give: to their wives, their children, to colleges, to hospitals, to churches, until the whole world is amazed at their generosity.

The habit and fury of work, unreasoning, illogical, quite unrelated to any need, is a masculine disease in this country, and

the whole social system has for years paid the inevitable penalty. Here and there a man tries to stop in time, but finds himself obsessed by work so that he can no longer think of anything else. He is as much a slave to it as is any opium-taker to his drug, or drunkard to his potion. It is a grave danger, not only to the individual, but to the whole American civilization.

The young Americans too, who are so contemptuous about our girls' preference for foreigners, must look to themselves and their shortcomings for some of the cause, and must, with the older men, share the responsibility for it. In the first place, our young men are not good lovers, however in the end they may be good husbands. And what girl of twenty has the foresight to comprehend that?

If she has that foresight she is simply not "in love," as the phrase goes, — and alas! it takes so much love to carry a woman, any woman, through the tremendous strain of marriage. A very necessary

and a very wise foresight is not natural in any maiden, and that is one of the solid advantages of the European system, at which we so glibly sneer.

The difference in the divorce records of Europe and the United States is not all to the credit of any church. Where the head dominates the heart, the results show in the long run in marriage as well as in any other undertaking. The over-sentimentalism in all such matters with us carries with it the gravest of dangers. We expect our girls to "fall in love" and at the same time be their own cool-headed chaperones; girls from whom we carefully hide the living truth. Is there logic in that? The opinion (which has been held for some twenty years) is ventured that the purely temperamental difference between American men and those of England and the Continent, is at the bottom of the freedom we have found it safe to accord our girls. The latter are not so intrinsically impeccable, but the former are by nature temperamentally cold, a

condition perhaps due to several generations of overstraining.

No sensitive woman can be in Europe a single day without recognizing this fact beyond all caviling. No man save a trained psychologist would recognize this pathological fact, of which hundreds of average American women-travelers have spoken to the writer, from girls of seventeen to women of fifty. "We women count for so much more over there, don't we?" is very often the way it is put.

On the other hand, the leisure of our women, their coddling, their luxury of living, has developed them along exactly opposite lines. May not this growing temperamental difference account for some of the tendencies in our civilization that seem obscure?

Our young men lean back and complacently argue that, as their hands and hearts are clean, and as all other men are rascals, in greater or less degree, they should be of course preferred. Have they gone no deeper into the question than that? Would

Thisbe have cared as ardently for Pyramus if the Wall had not been there?

Who carry flowers, jellies, books, sympathy to criminals, however hideous their crimes, but the women? The ill-regulated, unreasoning emotionality of a large number of our women is not to be overestimated in determining any question appertaining to them. Women's Rights women, — so-called,— who naturally affiliate one with another, may shudder and laugh derisively to their heart's content, but the truth is unassailable, that *worth* has not yet succeeded in deciding the love-affairs of either sex. Men are in no greater degree attracted by the gentle, well-balanced, womanly girls, who would make excellent wives, than the latter by the honest, disinterested, temperate, clean-hearted men. If men and women did make wise selections the villains would be at hand. Other matters decide such problems. The question of brilliancy of plumage is not so far behind us humans that it no longer counts. Our

college men study these matters, but fail to make the atavistic analogy when it comes to social matters in their later lives. Hence their profane rage at the girls when foreigners come fortune-hunting.

If the truth were told, most young American men are not especially interesting. They do not keep up their reading. They have a national obtundity when it comes to music, to art, to literature ; nor do many of them take any of these things at all seriously. The young among them are not good conversationalists. Our cleverest men are monologists pure and simple. They lecture admirably. They are born orators along modified lines. They are inevitable story-tellers. None of this is conversation ; and women like conversation, like its courtesies, which at least pretend a little interest when their turn comes in the game. Knowledge of people and affairs outside our own country pricks more than one bubble about our young men.

Tired men fill our vaudeville theatres,—

for there at least the audience is largely masculine,— even in the daytime. They are too near exhaustion to do more than listen to wit quite easy of comprehension. Our girls are accustomed to amusing these tired men. That joy of being amused, of being interested by a man of the world, is not to be omitted in any just weighing of the question why they find foreigners attractive; and as time passes, in spite of all the bitter disillusionments of the past, our rich girls will make more and more unflattering selections from among suitors from across the seas. And it is full time our young men awakened to their own share in the causes which lead to such a condition. The whole social system of England and of Europe generally spares a girl such shameful sales. The mothers, the fathers, the men about her, are equipped to protect her, and they take the time and spare the energy to do so. Justly considered, it is a social, psychic question, quite apart from man's commercial value in the world.

WHY AMERICAN MOTHERS FAIL

WHY AMERICAN MOTHERS FAIL

"You wish, O woman, to be ardently loved, and forever, even till death! Be, then, the mother of your children." — "LEVANA."

MOTHERS are the gardeners of the human race. There is no office under the divine government that approaches theirs, because none other is so closely allied to it.

Any system of education that fails to impress upon our girls the immense civic value of motherhood, its imposing dignity, its grave responsibilities to the state itself, fails of its purpose. Any system of education in our republic that does not instill, from the start, into an American boy, the fact that this government is rooted in his vote and that of his comrades, fails doubly of its purpose.

Our much-vaunted public-school sys-

tem, which we shake like a *banderole* in the face of Europe, does neither of these things; or rather, it does the former not at all, and the latter most perfunctorily and inadequately.

The reason that girls are not taught the dignity of motherhood is only too obvious: it is but the usual crude, shamefaced American way of totally ignoring the wholesome primal elements of human life. Our schools shirk the responsibility by claiming that such counsel should come from mothers. And the mothers are rare indeed who do not ignore, generation after generation, this fundamental problem.

Between the two negligences girls practically are never given this larger point of view, which would be good not only for the state, but also for their own personal uplift above that sense of personal failure that so often comes to us all.

The boys are not inoculated with the germ of citizenship because their education is too often left in the hands of rou-

tine teachers totally incapable of any large outlook upon life, or else of those whose hands are tied by convention. Again, neither parents nor schools do their duty by the boy any more than by the girl. There are no state or federal laws to force recognition of such vital questions; to direct, *at once*, the hearing of American boys and girls to that deep national note that would bind them to life's bigger harmonies, to those larger relationships of the individual to government and society. These two sentiments alone, thoroughly instilled in the flexible minds and hearts of our young people, would, later on, stay many a hand bent on the social suicide of divorce; and also in two generations would begin to make for good in the world of politics.

Unfortunately, educational legislation is slow to recognize its own shortcomings, slower still to rectify them. American men, as a whole, are as strangely weak and invertebrate in their relations to their children as they are in their relations to their

wives. The quicker remedy lies there. But only a riper, sounder civilization, with enlarged vision, will see its utmost needs, and make its demands.

So, after all, it is to the mothers one must speak with lowered voice: to the gardeners, some wise and some unwise; some patient and some restless; the strong of vision, and the near-sighted gardeners, working among the human seedlings and young plants in the great garden called Society.

Fathers are seldom more than the florists connected with the hothouses. They deal almost solely with effects; after the mothers have done, well or ill, the work down in the dark under the blossoming plant, digging sometimes very blindly among the twisted roots of cause.

So it has come about that, when the young children in her care grow awry, we inquire of the mother and her methods; just as we bespeak the truck-gardener when our vegetables are amiss, or a horse-

breeder when our cattle breed down along degenerate lines.

A successful mother (fighting both heredity and individual bias) is a more important factor in a municipality than any merely successful man in it; much more important, were she but made to realize it. For motherhood is a thing apart, "a distinct and individual creation; different from anything else God ever thought of," said, in all reverence, an American preacher. Her position has in it all the tragedy of lifelong isolation in the performance of her work; all the pathos of vast expenditure of vitality with no personal reward. The millionaire railroad official, once an office-boy, gets his reward for tremendous labor, in power and money; the scientist gets his in the world's recognition of his accomplished work. The mother's reward is spiritual, and lies only in the work itself, for she has not the stimulus of an audience, and few indeed are the children who recognize their mother's struggles, their

mother's sacrifices. As to her love, they accept it as they do the air they breathe; and who of us stops to thank Oxygen and Nitrogen for combining so conveniently for our benefit?

All of this purposely leaves out the mother's emotional reward, for reasons that will appear later. Much more important than any matter of sentiment is it that she should learn that she is doing something for her country, apart from all the very best efforts of man. It would not be amiss if in every home one found this sentence of Phillips Brooks's, illuminated, and hung well "on the line": "No man has come to true greatness who has not felt, in some degree, that his life belongs to his race, and that what God gives him He gives him for mankind."

There is a pathetic hopelessness about many mothers. One so often hears them wearily say, "I've given up my whole life for years to my children, and yet it seems to have failed. They are not as I meant

them to be, nor as I hoped that they would be. What is wrong? I wish someone would help me."

It is suggested, in all humility and tenderness, that there are several things going amiss in the human garden. In the first place, it takes something besides feminine hearts to manage men and the offspring of men; it takes feminine brains, every wisdom-tipped arrow in a woman's quiver. Nine times out of ten, women put too much emotion, and not enough judgment, into both wifehood and motherhood. Everything has combined for centuries to bring this about. Much of the discontent of the present day among women is based on the fact that they do not yet realize that their life-tasks are not properly merely emotional at all, but preëminently intellectual. It is safe to say that if a woman finds that her life makes no use of her intellect, she is a bad housekeeper, a poor wife, a poorer mother, a useless citizen.

The best wives and mothers manage to preserve a certain mental aloofness from their husbands and children, the better to estimate with justice the task ahead. It is precisely that faculty which differentiates a woman from a tigress, whose mere emotion, considered by itself, in both relationships is no different *in kind* from the woman's own. One can count so absolutely upon the basic emotionality of women, that a deal of excision will still leave an abundance for the joy of man and his everlasting bewilderment. The whole present tendency in life is to the over-development of emotion among men, women, and especially children; and little or nothing is done to keep it in its proper proportion. As sentiment has been dying out in modern life, its place seems to be taken by nerve excitation; by a craving for agitation of any sort.

The present madness for speed over the seas, through the air, through the solid earth itself, unduly develops a sort of pleas-

urable trepidation among adults; as those so-called "amusements" at "resorts" both terrify and fascinate the unfortunate children who are allowed to flock to them. The hourly intrusion of news racks our nerves. It is the opium of this generation which we cannot long remain without. That hitherto restful week at sea, upon which overtaxed men and women could once count in simpler, slower times, is being taken from us forever.

Music is becoming more and more emotional as time passes. In the drama surely Sardou and Ibsen take more out of their auditors than even Shakespeare ever did. A novel must leave a man breathless, or he is bored; so, too, an afternoon drive. Winged Mercury is the god of the hour. A bit of a rascal, to be sure, but he "gets there"! There is no peace to be had, no restful slow-sipping of life that once satisfied our strong-nerved forefathers.

Woman has but drifted with the rushing current. Her wifehood is generally

measured by the yardstick of her pleasurable emotions; her motherhood very often by a series of passionate instincts which are allowed full sway, as if representing directly the word of God in a household. What is really needed to precipitate both peace and progress is, not the elimination, but the firm control of emotion and instinct, by cool deliberate feminine wisdom — all of that which should have been transmitted to her before marriage and motherhood, and all that she has herself since discovered.

Marriage and motherhood still come into a girl's life, even in this materialistic country of ours, in a succession of blinding emotional flashes, standing vividly out against the dark sky of utter ignorance. She is left bewildered, groping in the dark thereafter, feeling about her nothing stable, but only more, and more, and ever more — emotions!

Ignorant of her subject, criminally unprepared, her children are often a mere series of unsuccessful experiments, which

she tries, rather frantically, one after another, as each child presents new problems. For Nature has a trait which greatly complicates a mother's work: a mysterious passion for seemingly useless differentiation within a given species. This forces the mother both to pass new laws and to constantly revise old laws in her government code.

"Human experience, like the stern-lights of a ship at sea, illumines only the path which we have passed over." It is the searchlights for which we are pleading.

If a mother would but strive to put less heart into it all, and more mind! If she would but look with wide-open eyes and say to herself, "I will make the care of my children an intellectual task. I'll put into it what brains I have, as I used once to do into literary, philanthropic, or social matters. This is the most important of all, for it embraces everything else. It's not a mere question of alternating love and tears, fierce pride and frantic despair."

Her duties in the garden are three: 1. Watering the seeds. 2. Pruning the young growing plants. 3. Killing the offending insects at the blossoming time. And ever and always weeding is to be done, from the early spring till the snow comes.

I

THE SEEDS

On the whole, too much time is given by an American mother to a child in its infancy, between the first and the third year; too little time from the fourth to the tenth year; and after that she allows others' opinions, much too often, to dominate her own in both the mental and the moral development of her family. She has come to think that the task is no longer hers.

Thus it has come about that education has so largely become the cumbersome convention that it undoubtedly is. The fathers in the United States leave it to the mothers; the mothers leave it to the schools; the schools, public or private, are generally in the hands of narrow specialists, "common-schooled and uncultivated," in the sense that "culture looks beyond machinery," as Matthew Arnold said of us. So many par-

ents feed their children blindly into the educational hopper, and then walk to the spout at the other end to receive unquestioned the "finished" product. Schools override the mother's own intelligent convictions; Sunday schools take the place, and most inadequately, of her own sense of morality.

Nothing of this is as it should be. If a mother ever sinks into the background of her child's life she has no one to blame for it but herself. She has not risen to the task, that's all. Love has not proved itself everything in the solution of her problem. She can supplement the crudities of the child's mental schooling, and should leave Sunday schools for the motherless. No one can know, as she does, the weak spots in her offspring's character.

The love-madness of a young mother for her tiny infant, poetical and picturesque as it is, is harmful in many ways. It is to a great extent a sensuous obsession to which in this country the husband and father is, all too often, ruthlessly sacrificed. If this

sacrifice were in the least justified by the needs of the infant, there would be little to criticise; but it is distinctly not so justified in the average middle-class household. A phlegmatic nurse whose ministrations are rooted in duty alone, is not only equally as good for the baby, but is very much better. It is but a seed, and all the better, as are other seeds, for being left undisturbed to sleep its way into life.

If the child does not need all this frenzy of watching and excited coddling of the more or less hysterical mother, then it is not only unwise but cruel to subject the bewildered young father to the half-tragic, half-comic tyranny of an American household ruled by a young baby.

The violent *hushing* that he receives at the front door, the complete ignoring of all of his rights, the needless neglect hour after hour while his wife — pardon, his baby's mother! — worships at her new shrine, emphasize the unbalanced emotionality of most of our young women. Those hours of heedless

neglect on the part of the wife are very often the entering wedge which some day will separate the two. The child, instead of bringing them closer together, is the innocent cause of their growing apart. At the root of it is not too much love, but too little mental balance. Moreover, the contention is made that it is not wholly love which blinds her, it is to a certain extent the emotional indulgence of a febrile uncontrolled young woman adrift on the sea of a newly discovered instinct.

"Knowledge is the parent of love; Wisdom, love itself."

If it is claimed that the national curse of poor servants is the cause of this undeniable obsession of young American mothers, the reply is ready: "Why then is it that between the years of four and ten American children do not see enough of their mothers?" The servant question is surely no nearer solution, and no apathetic nurse can then give the child what the mother can and should give.

II

PRUNING THE YOUNG PLANTS

More than one American mother has admitted to the writer a curious sudden reaction of indifference against her once-worshiped baby after the fifth year. The ecstatic mother-passion of earlier days has mysteriously fled, just as the wife-ecstasy had fled in its turn. She admitted it, as if it were an interesting psychic phenomenon, and she helpless to right it—just when the child really begins to need her tenderness, her time, all of her wisdom and gravest consideration!

Every one of these successive phases of motherhood could just as well have been taught her years before, taught her to watch for, guard against, and meet intelligently when the issues presented themselves, one by one, in her own life. Some new factor must be evolved in our national

life to fill successfully this gap between four and ten in our children's lives.

Only when enforced by poverty do a large number of American mothers themselves care for their young children, beyond mere physical needs. They would not trust the little impercipient life at first to a nurse, however staid and competent; now, more often than is good to see, an ignorant nursemaid of sixteen years becomes the predominant element in the child's life. Manners, morals, mental needs are left largely in her hands — and she is a mere child herself. The physical needs, at least so far as cleanliness is concerned, generally remain in the mother's hands, but the question of the child's diet runs riot in more American households than is at all realized. If the child is well dressed, its hair and teeth in perfect condition, it is turned over to the nurse from eight in the morning till eight at night.

Can it be that we had much better adopt from England the nursery-governess and

the nursery-table? The former (with all her drawbacks) is infinitely more competent than our mere "nurse-girls"; while the latter institution ensures the simple diet of which our children are in such dire need.

At least we should be spared the sight of an elaborately dressed American baby of six, entirely unattended, walking into a huge hotel dining-room where her parents had lived for years, and ordering "deviled crabs and pink ice cream" for her dinner, which the poor little creature actually ate amid the smiling glances of the guests and waiters! It was no less than a painful sight, and by no means an isolated instance. What was inevitably ahead of that child? Her digestion ruined, her vanity, her independence forced before their time, her whole sensibility blunted. Even hotel-life need not spoil a child, if less money were spent on her clothes and her mother's and part of the saving paid in fair wages to a first-class governess, who would remove

the little one from flattering glances, and place her in a world where "deviled crabs" would remain an unknown temptation for many a long year to come.

If those American mothers who labor so many hours in torturing some flimsy material with drawn-work or embroidery would but give the same time, or even part of it, to the little child's spirit instead of its body! Very often we see a prince-like body, carrying a starving little soul, — starving for companionship, for healthy amusement, for that sense of comfort that strict but intelligent discipline alone brings alike to children and to servants.

Children's amusements in this country are undoubtedly becoming more and more artificial. Why? Because it makes the mother's and nurse's task easier. Examine the situation from whatever standpoint you choose, every facet shows this deplorable fact. To feed and clothe a child of five is a very simple and expeditious matter compared with amusing that restless little bun-

dle of activities. And yet in a long life the writer has known only one mother who took upon her own shoulders the entire amusement of her family of five children, leaving the sewing to the nurses! There were no theatres, no vaudeville, no circuses, no hippodromes, to bewilder and exhaust those children's minds; no mechanical toys, no elaborate paper dolls "made in Germany." They had hammers, nails, and some boards; pieces of treasured Bristol-board, scissors, paste, and a little paint-box, and the "stay-in" days flew by, given over to the joy of creation under the sympathetic direction of that mother, who sat in a low chair, close to their level, that she might be one of them. On the out-of-door days, they were tumbled into a little wagonette, which was their nursery. The old pony was driven by the mother herself; the best child of the day sat beside her in the seat of honor, and off they jogged to the woods or the beach, both of which were happily accessible. Their

simple lunch was devoured afield. The mother invented, directed, and entered into all their games,—the merriest of them all. But the charm of an ocean beach is supreme and needs no human aids; so, once she gave a push to the little eager minds, off they slid, enthusiastic and contented for hours. The mother whipped out a book from under the carriage-seat, and so got to herself a couple of hours of coveted reading. For she was a brilliant, cultivated woman, knowing several languages — and yet was content to spend it all lavishly for thirteen years of her short life, upon her children.

This inspired mother claimed that it was far less of a strain to play with her children than to punish them; because a large percentage of the sins of childhood are based on lack of intelligent diversion. From this mother came no whine about her wasted talents,—because she made use of them! During the severe winters, she made her incessant task of reading to

her children tell significantly. Before the eldest was ten years old, they all knew almost every nook and cranny of Walter Scott, and other standard works followed in turn. She read certain idyllic tales written in French, which she translated aloud into simple English, thereby diverting herself as well as the children. It was years before they even knew what she had done. One of that family told me that he had never read a current book of fiction until he was sixteen! His taste had been formed without any long-winded lectures on literature. Froissart, Æsop, Josephus, and Bunyan were household words.

Later, the mother wrote little plays full of fire and sword, into which was smuggled many a spoonful of history, or mythology, or poetical legend. The children were the eager little stock company. She rehearsed them, suggested costumes and scenery; and yet, with all this prodigal expenditure of time and real talent, she always laughingly claimed to other mothers: "Try it!

They are happier, and so am I. Idleness and absence of motive lead to crime in the nursery as well as the street. And as for me, I know exactly what they are doing, and how."

Hers was a rarely rich, successful life. That she was a much-loved woman to the end scarce need be recorded of her.

Within a year the *dernier cri* in child-amusement at a charitable *fête* brought vividly back, through contrast, that picture of fine motherhood. Kinetoscopes depicted, for tents reeking full of feverish-eyed children, fictitious scenes of Russian cruelty ending in a most revolting form of murder! Little breathless voices asked in the dark: "What does it mean, mother?" "Why does he hate her so much, mother?" One strained in the half light to see such mothers of little beings who would have been so happy merely roaming through the adjoining meadows! Then later came another "amusement" for the children. A real hose-and-ladder com-

pany, a real fire engine rented for the purpose; a fire alarm, the burning of a small wooden house erected for the purpose, the realistic rescue of a straw mother and child,—all for the amusement —save the mark!—of those watching babies! The whole thing was absolutely insane in its blindness to the real needs of child-life. No wonder we see them blasé at eight, nervous wrecks at twelve, neurasthenia, insomnia, dipsomania, decadence ahead of them. And the committee who made out this programme (including many another "sensational feature") was composed of *the leading women* of the city in which the festival was held. Where were the mothers to wipe out with justifiable wrath such a breach of sane thinking? such an outrage to the most obvious of responsibilities?

Our American communities are quick to regulate child-labor in some wretched household where the pennies count so much; but one seldom hears of any laws

to regulate children's amusements among the many comfortable homes where the mothers are either too weak, too silly, or too selfish, to make and enforce their own laws.

And so the weeds come thick and fast and choke the young growing plants,— the weed of vaudeville, killing the sense for true dramatic art; the pest of rag-time, killing music; slang, choking language; indiscriminate current-novel-reading, fatal to any good reading in the future; the devastating weed of unhealthy excitement, to blight, for all time, any simple wholesomeness of either thought or feeling.

A law prohibiting children under the age of fifteen from entering any and all theatres might well be passed with profit, taking out of the incompetent hands of mothers any volition in this grave matter. It fills the air — this craze of the merest children for cheap shows in this country; it packs their minds with vulgar trivialities, debases their ideals, perverts their taste. It is becoming daily more frequent.

As well feed a child on mushrooms and champagne, and expect it ever afterwards to relish bread and milk.

It is but a repetition of that poor neglected baby and her "deviled crabs and pink ice cream"! One sees hundreds of examples of it, in one form or another, every year of living in this country. At the root of it, in every single instance, is an unwise mother. Her children remain ignorant where they should be familiar; become enlightened where they should be blind; and suffer always from enlargement of the emotions.

Within a year the writer saw at a hotel an eager group of beautifully clad little ones gathered every evening between seven and eight about a middle-aged cripple who told them stories. They were breathless, entranced. That it was a perfectly new element in their lives was apparent. To be deprived of it was the severest punishment in that colony of several hundred souls.

A young woman was overheard idly to observe to her companion, "Is n't it a charming sight?"

The older woman with her replied angrily: "It is distinctly *not* a charming sight! It is shocking! What are they, with all their extravagant clothes, but the starving children of selfish, vain mothers? That unfortunate man simply fills up an awful gap in their lives — every mother as she sees it should blush and hang her head. Out of that score of children, there is not one who has ever had an adult give it any real companionship before in its life. I have taken the trouble to verify this — and so I say again, that picture over there is far from being charming!"

III

DESTROYING THE INSECTS AT BLOSSOMING TIME

A WISE mother will make long-stored wisdom bear fresh fruit. All of her reading can be utilized. Long ago she read that "a word unspoken is like a sword in thy scabbard—*thine;* if vented, thy sword is in another's hand." She can draw a lesson from it for her son in the power of silence and reserve. She also read that "respect for others is the first condition of *savoir vivre*"; and she is helped in her task of teaching her girl tactfulness and good manners; and that they are not to be looked for in a labyrinth of negatives, but found walking along the highway in the good sunshine.

In the much-mooted question of manners the imitativeness of children should make the mothers' task easier than it is,

for the solution is example, not precept. Imitation is the whole story. A little boy is scolded for not remembering to raise his cap "to the ladies." I have met lads of six and eight to whom this courtesy had already become as instinctive as it was to their father. No more so, no less, but exactly as it was to their father. "Trot father, trot mither, how can foal amble?"

Making all allowance for wide national differences of opinion, there is much in a French mother's sympathy with her son, as he approaches manhood, which seems more intelligent than the Anglo-Saxon way of withholding sympathy at that crisis. Most American mothers suddenly turn into stepmothers at this critical period. Every sentence begins with "Thou shalt not," and she plumes herself upon her righteousness. And her boy? He becomes a stranger to her. The French mother but adds a new comradeship to her old tenderness, full of far-sighted wisdom and fathomless sym-

pathy for existing conditions; not for ideal conditions that do not exist. He and his mother become closer friends than ever, and he does not withdraw himself from her. She cares much more for her boy than for her righteousness — this mother!

It is but a change in the intellectual outlook, and yet surprisingly few American women recognize the necessity for it. When an American mother has the intelligence to understand, she finds that her son will bring to her not only his triumphs but his failures; not only the story of his virtues but that of his sins, — man to man, — and then only the wisest motherhood can guide him safely out of the wilderness.

But the deepest stain on American motherhood is exactly at this period in the life of her grown son and grown daughter. For some reason, partly temperamental, a large number of mothers fall short of any comprehension of what

is demanded of them. Even when they have been faithful in all their earlier trusts, they fail very often at this point.

Her boy, now a man, of course loves her as of old, but she has not been his intellectual comrade, his strongest inspiration, as she might have been had she put her brain into her motherhood, applied what knowledge she had, or studied along the best lines running parallel to the lines of his development.

There are scores of helpful hygienic and philosophical books that would aid mothers to approach their problem well-equipped. All this is of course also the task of the father, but we are speaking of American conditions, and we may as well exclude him first as last, as he has elected to shed family responsibilities, save that of lavish monetary support. In that particular he is a prince.

One illustration cut from the matrix of life is worth a chapter of generalities. One summer night a few years ago four

people sat on a high roof near New York City. One could see far down the bay and over to the Jersey shore. There was a middle-aged woman and her son of twenty-three years, an elderly man and his wife — all Americans.

The mother had been boasting of her three boys, their success, their virtues. Under it all was a very natural and pretty pride, as of a gardener telling of his roses, and their freedom from the worm i' the bud.

A chance word brought politics to the front. The older woman said aside to the young man : —

"So you've twice cast your yote! It marks an epoch in a man's life, only second to marriage, does n't it? To take one's part, though small, in the making of history — that is fine!"

The mother laughed.

"My son has never voted, and says he never will — he hates politics, and I don't wonder!"

All as lightly as if telling of a fastidious taste in cravats!

The son added tolerantly, "We men know what a dirty mess it is."

In the older woman's heart moaned a sad voice: "*She is a failure, this mother!* She is blind, and so he, the son, does not see the truth!"

The silence which followed was filled by the languor of the heat and the pressure of low-bending skies.

Then the older man chuckled and muttered: "There's trouble ahead — low bridge!" For he knew his wife and the hot fires flaming beneath her silence.

"Will you take me over there, where I can see the light on the Statue of Liberty?" she presently asked quietly, and she and the youth walked away.

It took her forty-five minutes to do the work, and years have passed, but that man has voted ever since!

Jerking her head in the direction of Bedloe's Island, she began: —

"Oh don't laugh, don't laugh, you have admitted a crime! Don't you know, have n't you been taught, don't you see for yourself, that every time an educated man in the United States fails to vote he has slyly slipped a stone out of place in the foundations of that great statue over there, — the foundations of our government? Upon your vote rests the security of the whole complicated structure of republicanism, as we Americans are now testing it in the eyes of the world. Whatever you do, do not laugh!"

In the end she held out her hand and spoke gently: "You see I, being a woman, have no vote, so you must cast yours for yourself and for me too, as wisely as you can. Will you?"

The mother was still laughing when the older woman bade them good-night; but the latter was very sad, having no sons of her own with any need of her.

American women constantly cry out against the smallness of their lives, the

limitations that encompass them. If they would but do wisely and thoroughly their apportioned tasks, they would have need of every power possible to humanity, such are the potentialities of true motherhood.

The schools of both son and daughter would be forced into rational, logical lines; the boy would be trained first, last, and always, for good citizenship; the daughter would not be allowed to drift on, as helpless as a leaf on a stream, with no knowledge whatever of the currents, the cataracts, the whirlpools ahead of her — inevitably ahead of her — on her way down to the broad sea of fine womanhood.

Women fret themselves and others for the right to vote, and they do not see that their son's vote, their brother's, their friend's, is verily their own. They cry out against certain social evils, and they forget that the ranks are ever recruited from among the daughters of Vanity, Uncontrol, and Idleness.

Even the childless women of the world have placed upon them the responsibility of motherhood; for every young man can be a task to them, every girl better for their counsel.

There is no excuse for idleness or repining — there is work in plenty for all women; and it is the most honorable work in the world, for —

"On the blue mountains of our dim childhood towards which we ever turn and look, stand the mothers who marked out to us, from thence, our life."

WHAT WE PUT UP WITH

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I

THE feeling of an American for his flag is especially deeply rooted. It is the only symbol he has, about which to wreathe whatever of national sentiment he has within him. It takes the place of a royal family in our imaginations; it survives our changes of administration; it stands the assaults of war, and the equally perilous countermining of peace. It has come to symbolize, in a word, our national continuity.

The tiniest emigrant is quickly taught in our public schools to raise his grimy little fist in salutation of it; the toughest old soldier or sailor needs no other leadership to spur him on to death in its defense. It is as if we were to paraphrase that old mingled cry of mourning and tri-

umph, "Le Président est mort; vive le Drapeau!"

Only a couple of yards of bright bunting, and eighty millions of people behind it — couchant.

And yet surely there is no nation of them all which so persistently misuses its most cherished emblem, forgetful that "if we wish ourselves to be high, we should treat that which is over us as high." Nothing is more certain than that "familiarity excludes respect," as Æsop chose to put it.

One must live for five years under the flags of other nations to thrill deeply at sight of one's own; patriotism seeming to grow in a ratio of distance from home. Witness the sore-headed German Socialist fuming like a furnace in the Fatherland, where nothing pleases him, from the Kaiser down to the tax on beer; and see him three years later transplanted to American soil, raising his *stein*, with tears in his eyes, as he drinks his "Hoch der Kaiser."

The writer in her younger days has stood for hours up in the old Campanile at Venice, or across the canal at the Salute, and watched daily for the coming of a certain white ship-of-war carrying "the Flag." At last there was a movement in the pale distance far down the harbor, as if a phantom ship out of the dim past had entered the Diga of Malamocco. Creeping on and on in the breathless iridescent morning air, at last the great white monster emerged, and came more and more slowly through the narrow path to the harbor. The Flag —the Stars and Stripes! And then a sudden veil of tears blots out all: ship and flag and shore and quivering sunlight — all but the aching thought of — home!

Years later this Exile (not Expatriate), coming down from the Black Sea on the Bosphorus up near Buyukdereh, with Asia on the left and Europe on the right, and with thoughts bent full upon that unique geographical situation, suddenly felt her heart stop beating with a passionate nos-

talgia, all interest in geography dead at a breath.

A wandering breeze had brought down a strain of familiar music, so foreign to the environment as to be humorous but for its fierce tug at the heart—"Dixie," played on a mandolin and a guitar, coming from a trim yacht anchored off Therapia, the Flag floating sleepily from her stern. Space was annihilated, home brought so close that one stopped breathing.

And again, a few years later, in Manila Bay the Exile stood on the deck of the flagship which had led the battle line not many months before, during the fight of that first of May.

The western sky was quartered in blood and gold and silver and iridescence; one of those tropical sunsets that are impossible to paint by either brush or pen.

About the American man-of-war was that pitiful semicircle of half-sunken Spanish ships, before there was time to remove them. In the centre of the poop of the

Olympia, silhouetted against that blazing sunset, was the distinguished-looking, very erect figure of the admiral, in white uniform, standing at attention, facing the Flag as it was lowered from the staff. As it slipped down very slowly to its rest for the night, the bugles sounded retreat. Motionless and in absolute silence the little band of exiles saw the naval ceremony through to its finish.

There were few on deck that evening who failed to realize that it was an illuminated page in American history, a thing to hush the light jest, excuse enough for full eyes and quivering lips.

Against such a mental background as this, the following pictures stand out with almost painful clearness. Another year and another, and "home" was no longer an abstraction to be wept over. It was there within gun-shot of the steamer's rail; the Flag on Fort Hamilton whipping about smartly in the lively afternoon breeze, while farther up the beautiful bay

the Statue of Liberty was veiled in the incoming fog from the sea.

But the Exile's eyes were dry, her pulse quick with righteous indignation, her heart on fire with the first deliberate insult she had received in all her wanderings — at the very door of that "home" over which she had so long, so tenderly brooded!

At English ports her oath was demanded that she was bringing nothing contraband, "no spirits nor tobacco"; in Italy her keys were demanded. She had given each cheerfully as it was asked for, her keys or her oath. But it was reserved for her own country to first demand her solemn oath, and then instantly repudiate it by demanding her keys — all in one impertinent breath.

Surely, after all, that French critic was justified who writes of "la dure inintelligence des Américains du Nord." Such a condition as invariably confronts the returning American wanderer is not exactly calculated to further his patriotism; it is

undeniably "hard" and even more "unintelligent."

And of all the equally affronted, equally outraged hundreds that the Exile has since seen on home-coming steamers, she has met only one whose voice was heard in quiet but passionate protest. The voice of the People has dwindled, it seems! All the rest drifted in that current of *laisser faire* that so ill fits a growing people; some silently savage; some men muttering empty anathemas which they forgot the next day; more vying with one another in that "addiction to the funny man" which is the "national misfortune" of America, as wrote that best and fairest critic of us — Matthew Arnold.

One voice has at last been raised in partial protest against this brutal condition, but his efforts are handicapped by the law.

More and more our Congressmen are beginning to see beyond their village horizons; to vaunt less often the American claim of perfection; to find some wisdom

in the words of Haydon: "Never disregard what your enemies say — so far as it goes, attend to them." So perhaps the dawning of hope at least, if not of redemption, is at hand.

The national talent for laughing off the sting of such abuses of individual liberty is one of the fairly long list of things upon which we pride ourselves. Is it not rather an inherent insensitiveness — that "dure inintelligence" — that has made it possible for us to have tolerated it so long?

The flag that was wept over in Europe and in Asia, is seen here billowing over hotels and boarding-houses, for no other than commercial purposes; seen in saloon windows helping patriotically to advertise and elevate a Western whiskey over the Scotch and Irish brands; seen fastened on a national holiday to the blinders of a weary mule to keep off the flies! That of late something has been done toward curtailing these abuses of our flag, is gratefully admitted; but a recent holiday saw each and

all of the old abuses returned in full force. There were no protests from the public, no arrests by the police. To pass laws seems a very easy thing for us to accomplish; rigidly and persistently to enforce them, from one mayor's administration to another, is yet to be achieved. Almost as soon as born, an amazing number of our laws become dead-letter.

Is it so small a thing that our only symbol of autonomy and union should be misused, degraded? Even a starving scrub-woman parts last of all with her wedding-ring!

The public cemetery where are buried our neglected and unfathered issues, great and small, is in our comic weeklies. There, side by side with the custom-house outrage, we lay the affront to the Flag (which we have followed reverently all over the world), and we bury them both among the other national "jokes," with national flippancy.

They are just two of the things we put up with.

II

"Cleverness is serviceable for everything, sufficient for nothing." — AMIEL.

IT has recently been cleverly said of this poor pen-ridden generation of ours, that "they even put the letters of the alphabet into their soup"!

Who of us has not, more than once, been tempted to regret those simple ancient times when a band of hieroglyphics cut into an upright stone represented all that was considered worth recording during a century or two of living under the Egyptian sun? Surely such a condition of temperate and leisurely news-gathering comes nearer sanity, nearer the decencies of civilization, than the present daily — almost hourly — rehash of local crime and senseless personalities served up, more or less cleverly, in certain of our newspapers, turning the largest city into a mere village agape for vulgar or vi-

cious tittle-tattle. It does very little towards letting in either Sweetness or Light upon a world given over to acidity and darkness. It is indeed "news for the servants' hall"!

Year after year we hear much boasting, among our loud-voiced majority, of our national gift for news-getting; and tolerant laughs at the "smartness" that crawls in the mud, face-down, under other people's hedges, bent upon no higher mission than a newspaper's profit; albeit avowing to high heaven a motive fairly pickled in the vinegar of righteousness!

The voiceless minority of the land (although apt to be much the more enlightened) is disenfranchised by one of several modern political fallacies, and has no recourse under present conditions but to wait and mutter to the wall, as do the Arabs: "When you are an anvil, be patient; when a hammer, strike!" Knowing that the Prophets of a country, if not the Law, are ever found in the meagre ranks of the minority, and praying some day to be the

"hammer," and then Allah grant we may fashion a new set of decencies for our country!

An English critic has truly said of us that we have but the newspapers we deserve, and that they are "the direct product of the want felt," else they would soon die, as do the books that no one reads.

Some of our claims against another nation's press laws, and in favor of our own, are delightfully inconsequent and contradictory. Our indignation at the printed pruriency of France almost chokes us; and yet the daily lawlessness of our own "cockney" press, its gloating exposure of moral rottenness, reaches and pollutes the minds of literally millions of our boys and girls, whereas a book of Maupassant's would have reached but a few score of readers — repelling a sensation-fed public, rather than attracting it, by its very literary art. And yet his books — ask for them at a public library!

The whole civilized world was revolted

by the extraordinary license allowed certain of our newspapers during a recent daily exposure of an unsightly crime. For the most priggish nation in the world to-day stood unveiled for once, and we were known as a nation of hypocrites. It was demanded of us: "Where are your laws to put a stop to this? Where the public opinion to demand closed doors, or at least a decent expurgation? Is your freedom but license in domino?"

That the churches went promptly into hysterics, after every last hideous detail had been well-rooted in the public imagination, only adds to the odious humor of the situation.

That good of any sort can possibly come out of these American "exposures" — as we call them — is simply an insult to human intelligence. If good (as those interested financially in the question claim), then why expurgate the gentle Amiel in the translation? Why govern our magazines by strict unwritten laws until they have be-

come monuments of dry prudishness, full of half-truths? If the whole truth about living be beneficial to the public morals when dished up daily in a half-penny paper by a half-penny reporter, surely it can do no harm when served monthly on cream-paper by a cultivated literary expert!

There is no logic whatever in our attitude. Rather let the newspapers be rigidly controlled by written laws, and the present unwritten laws governing our magazines be relaxed a bit. Should we then not be a little nearer to that higher civilization rightly denied us by the critics of the "American experiment"?

That the power behind the magazine's editors lies in its advertisements is of course well understood. It is often privately pleaded in palliation of editorial prudery. But surely this commercial sensitiveness is sometimes overdone! A magazine sub-editor once confessed to being compelled, under strict orders from the manager, to blue-pencil some lines, in a short story,

descriptive of a doll's lace-trimmed underwear, — a recent threat of withdrawal of certain advertisements from a Western hardware man, offended by a like, but lesser, indiscretion, having lent a temporary sensitiveness to the editorial modesty. Yet this absurd, almost unbelievable, decorum is contemporaneous with a daily press that goes on its outrageous way, unrebuked, unostracized.

Leaving the fields of newspapers and periodicals, one meets in the world of books quite a different — and almost equally deplorable — condition, if judged by the laws of *higher* civilization ; and do we not every hour loudly proclaim our right to such judgment?

There are signs that the government of our public libraries is largely left in the hands of a rather anæmic type of men and women, obsessed by a sleepless desire to find the worm of evil (of one particular species) i' the bud of literature ; bent seemingly upon withholding a healthy, all-round

knowledge of life, that might better instead be looked upon as the surer safeguard of youth.

This passion for nothing less than the elimination of "sex" from literature has at last reached the point of fanaticism; which, in face of the daily countermining of our yellow press, is fit food for laughter on Olympus.

Within a year, a conversation with one of the assistant librarians in a branch of the largest public library in the United States developed several startling facts. During a recent administration of affairs in the "mother" library, of more than average fanaticism, the "non-replacement" law included "Little Women" in its list. That is, when worn out, the copies were not to be replaced. "David Harum" and those of Dumas that are the most worth reading were also blacklisted.

The gradual obscuration of "The Three Musketeers" was bad enough, but the incredible affront to Miss Alcott's pure taste

and sound judgment passes belief. The reason given for this slow eclipse was that there was "too much love-making in it for young people" — adult tax-payers being allowed no voice! Which is the cleaner, healthier course — to withhold from our young people the fact that there is love to be reckoned with in the world, or to teach them how to meet it with the sweet sanity of Louisa Alcott's Jo and Meg and Beth and Laurie and the dear old stuffy Professor. For come it will, sooner or later, even if the sedentary librarian's blood *is* thin and stagnant.

The mind capable of so fanatic a decision is heir direct to the minds of the Massachusetts selectmen of 1656, who fulminated against the "enormioss crimes" of their day, among which was the sitting together on the Lord's Day of a maiden and a man, under an apple tree in "Goodman Chapman's orchard"; or to that delightful sentence against a certain dare-devil Peter Bussaker, of the same year, given here-

with in behalf of the shades of Louisa Alcott: —

"The court adjudgeth Peter Bussaker for his filthy and profane expressions (viz. that he hoped to mete some of the members of the church in hell ere long, and he did not question but he should) to be committed to prison, there to be kept in safe custody till the sermon [humor at least could not have come over in the Mayflower!], and then to stand in the time thereof in the pillory [no light sentence in that day!] and after sermon to be severely whipped."

One's sympathies go out to the naughty Peter in his sudden frenzy of wrath against his small-minded tormentors. We also have ours in this day and generation, and they often mistake temperamental prejudice for the voice of the Almighty.

So it comes to pass that our land abounds in the dangerous evil of unrestrained license, side by side with the warping evil of unrestrained Puritanism, forgetting that "Lib-

erty exists in proportion to wholesome restraint."

If a publisher chose to flood the market with a cheap edition of "Candide" or the "Heptameron" for the good of his empty pocket, how long before he would feel the hand of the law on his collar? And yet there is something in our character — "dure inintelligence"? — which grants our most objectionable newspapers absolute immunity from the same law, planting more seeds of crime in the hearts of our youth than ever did Voltaire, or Margaret of Navarre, at their worst. The former picture of evil is a photograph of next-door life; the latter are paintings dim with distance, seen down a long vista of time; so *maniéré* do they seem that their deliberate intention is obscured. And yet the former is sold for one cent to hundreds of thousands, the latter locked in *éditions de luxe* behind glass doors.

It is but another of the things we inertly put up with, and then wonder whence come our waves of crime.

III

"Take a straw and throw it up into the air, you shall see by that which way the wind is; which you shall not do by casting up a stone." — JOHN SELDEN.

We put up with a deal of sham street-cleaning; one immaculate avenue to fifty filthy cross-streets, through which pass only obscure tax-payers, too fagged to protest.

We put up with public ash-carts, coverless or with unused or inadequate covers, into which barrels of refuse are heedlessly dumped on the windiest day. There are, to be sure, sanitary laws against all of these abuses, but they too are not enforced by the police, save on the aforesaid immaculate avenue. And the Voice of the People? It is seldom heard outside of the market place. To be sure, at the next election the votes go to a man who promises a sanitary millennium, and fulfills but a hundredth part of his political promise. And so it

goes on, one decade after another, until all sense of shame has gone out of us. "The greatest people on earth" have not one city in all their land as clean, as well lighted, as well managed, as beautiful, with such a street-car system, as Buda-Pesth, way down in Hungary, not to stop short of that.

In France, Germany, Norway (where Christiania has an enviable reputation in the administration of sanitary laws, pointed out in 1877 by the London "Lancet") these things are better managed than with us; not perhaps better in theory, but undoubtedly better in execution. The several American commissions which have gone to Europe from time to time have stayed just long enough to discover that our laws compare favorably with theirs, but not long enough to watch the difference in their enforcement; and they return to proclaim their entire contentment with prevailing conditions, and so prolong them.

We put up with the uncovering of miles and miles of streets, torn up and then al-

lowed to lie untouched for months. Hygiene, the interests of the people, are sacrificed to our own particular Moloch-politics. Every intelligent adult knows perfectly well why these things are done. Knows that the public is made to wait until contractors come to terms with "bosses"; until such time as the workingman's vote must be bought by the bribe of mending those miles of up-torn streets.

If We, the People, supposed to rule this fair land, are not helpless to right these wrongs, then our shame is all the greater. There must be some great impelling force behind the street commissioners of Paris, and Vienna, and Berlin, where repairs are made in an unobtrusive, rapid, and cleanly manner, a few yards at a time.

Can it be possible that the broken-spirited people of "effete" Europe have, in truth, more power than those of "the greatest nation on earth"?

The opinion is ventured that no European government would *dare* stand the

indignation of the people (albeit down-trodden) if twenty miles of city streets were torn up at once and left for twenty months, until a set of politicians had made their bargain.

What has happened to "the government by the people"? Has it gone out of them? Or is it forgotten in the pure savagery of money-getting and absolute indifference to aught beside?

Such a condition is quite conceivable in a young country like ours — the hustling untidy West of the world; it is cause for censure only from our own self-appointed standard of American perfection.

Every word of honest criticism of anything American; every just comparison between this country and any other, that does not instantly end in self-laudation, is considered to be entirely overwhelmed by the old childish cry of: "We're the greatest people on earth, just the same!" When that comes, the only adequate reply is silence. A child has spoken, and there is

nothing to do but smile, and wait till he grows up. Of what use to ask his definitions? Of what use to claim that true patriotism is but love and suffers when the loved one stumbles? Justified by a great man's opinion that, —

> Love is never blind, but rather
> Alive to every minutest spot
> Which mars its object, —

and believing that always just beyond and above a great love lie our visions of perfection, we put up with garbage cast upon the waters and returning to us after many days. We put up with the turning of our parks into hideous scenes of filth and disorder every public holiday. To the reply that this constant breaking of our sanitary laws is done by Italians, Germans, Swiss, and Swedes, I would state from personal knowledge that none of these people would dare to commit such misdemeanors in their own native lands. Why? Because of fear of laws that are rigidly enforced.

They soon find over here that our bas-

kets and barrels, provided for such picnic refuse, are symbolic of our park laws — and as empty.

After every public holiday it costs our larger cities many hundreds of dollars to clean up. Would it not be more intelligent to use that entirely unnecessary yearly tax towards filling in the all too meagre ranks of our police force? If the people knew that every infringement of the law would be met by an arrest and a fine, the public catch-all would not stand an empty mockery of law and order.

Kew Gardens, when the sunset call sounds, are soon emptied of their thousands; and are as spotless when the gates are closed as when they were thrown open.

We put up with unbelievable impertinence from conductors and motormen, porters, brakemen, and cab-drivers, from one end of our Middle States to the other. In the south and west and in New England these petty officials may be familiar,

but they are less often outrageously rough and uncivil.

In the general absorption in business, such a thing soon becomes a mere *peu de chose*, quickly forgotten; and presently insensibility replaces just indignation.

If complaint is made, nine times out of ten, the further indifference, or even impertinence, of corporations shows plainly whence comes the temerity of their liegemen. The fact that a conductor's insolence has recently met with well-deserved punishment, and that the sentence has been greeted with loud acclaim from California to Florida, tells its own story.

Five years ago, in New York City, a scene took place in a Sixth Avenue surface car going south, so shameful that if the writer had not seen it, she would have hesitated long before repeating it.

There were about twenty people in the car, most of them coming under the anthropologic classification: "man — the aristocrat amongst the animals!" A thin,

shabby, but cleanly little woman got in about Twentieth Street: a foreigner, not long with us, feeling very much alone in the great strange city. There was something Russian, something German, in her face, and so it turned out. Her eyes were strained with fright, her pathetic mouth told its story of much work and very little love in her long life. What is more to the point, there was about her the inseparable dignity of honest living, which entitles a woman to respectful treatment right round the civilized world.

In very broken English she timidly asked the conductor if she was on the South Ferry car.

"Cough it up, old lady, where I can handle what yer say!" was the courteous reply, shouted out for the benefit of the car. Naturally she did not understand, but the fear in her eyes grew, her thin weary face flushed at this very untidy uniformed brute's manner and his impudent grin. His glance gathered in the audience

his vanity craved, while he amused himself "joshing one of them dagoes," as all foreigners are called by that class of our citizens.

The little woman asked her question again, trembling pitifully. Again that articled brigand mocked her: "Oh, so you lika-go-a Slouthy Ferry? Well, all I can say is you 're on the wrong-a car"; and he passed on!

And several of the listening workmen laughed. There might have been a dying child at the end of her journey for aught they knew; but they laughed, sunk in the insensibility of habitual usage to such scenes, and with a Chinese hatred of foreigners in all their hearts.

The look in the eyes of that helpless stranger somehow suggested the knout,— that other knout not much more brutish than these brave American citizens' jeers. The utter uselessness of either immediate feminine indignation, or of later written or personal protest to the railroad company

was a lesson which had been thoroughly and ignominiously learned years before. With patriotism at vanishing-point one beheld that baiting of this stranger within our gates. It was one more of the outrages that we put up with.

To cross the car, after one sharp word to the conductor (at which he grinned), to bring something that was perhaps once a smile when she was young, to the pitiful old face, by a few words in wretched German which happily she understood, was all that was left to be done. To go out of one's way for something over an hour to put the lost wanderer on her ferry, to leave her alternately waving a little rag of a handkerchief and wiping her eyes in sudden revulsion of feeling in favor of these terrible "States," was the very least that could be done to clear the name of one's country.

But to clear one's own conscience of that shrinking feminine weakness of non-interference, that stultifying of one's righteous longing personally to punish that licensed

brute, has left a burning in the heart which five years have not extinguished. There still remains that punishment to be given! Is it possible that the barest decencies of civilized life can be held up with impunity every day in our largest city? Are we really helpless to stop this growing reversion to semi-barbarism? Of what use to plead that the men in that car were weary workmen? Time is a very soluble sort of thing in men's hands, and undoubtedly "the peasant is a being of more marked *national* character than man the educated and refined."

To have one's words mocked to one's face anywhere in Europe or in the seaports of Asia, by a uniformed official, is almost inconceivable. It ill behooves us to appropriate the words "Christian," and "civilized," and to apply so recklessly the words "savage" and "pagan" when we speak of certain other nations.

What is wrong? Are we North Americans after all, as has been written of us, merely a political experiment, but socially

impossible? Even "the greatest nation on earth" may be all of that, and yet not be above improvement.

But we are not talking politics nor policies—just policing.

IV

"Our proper business is improvement." — WEBSTER.

STRANGELY enough, there are nations in the world to-day which regard the United States and the working out of its institutions very much as we are watching Japan and her institutions. We are both "interesting experiments."

Within twenty years it has been said of us by a great critic: "In what concerns the higher civilization, they live in a fool's paradise." And again: "For the real faults in American civilization, and for the foolish boasting which prolongs them, there is hardly a word of regret or blame — at least in public; although for political opponents there are plenty of hard words."

There are grave questions to be solved before we have proved our right to endure as the ideal of republican government.

If our citizens have found that they have

not the time to enforce our laws of sanitation (that are worse than worthless unless enforced); if they find themselves overwhelmed by mere routine questions of municipal government, from whence is to come the time and the strength to solve those supreme tests of our Republic, which lie across the path of our immediate future. Must we wait inertly for time to rectify the terrible error of 1868? How long are we to remain helpless under that act of political unwisdom? How long is it to remain the policy of the party in power to hide from the nation the fact that Mormonism is one-tenth religious, and nine-tenths a rapidly spreading political power all through the West? How long will the Mormons daily break their oath to the United States, and laugh softly in their sleeves? A physician once said: "Nature always gives many warnings of an impending illness, if we would but heed them."

Anarchy and class-hatred have raised their heads more and more frequently with

every twelvemonth. Is it the part of superior wisdom to take no heed of these warnings? Twice the writer has come into a sudden close contact with the hidden spirit of *à bas les autres!* Once in Hong Kong, on the Queen's Road, exactly five months before the Boxer outbreak against foreigners, which was telepathically felt to be impending, and so prophesied at the time. The second time was in a manufacturing town within an hour by rail of New York City. A mere passer-by, an old woman in the factory district, with the face of a furious *dame des Halles*, and a growl of hate, used her vigorous elbow as did the foreigner-hating Chinaman on the Queen's Road, and in both cases the passing victim landed fairly in the street, innocent of all but temporary amazement. Contemplation followed later.

How long will it be before the nation not only sees but acts upon the already obvious fact that we are no longer assimilating our immigration?

The vital necessity of reform in the ad-

ministration of our criminal laws could not well speak more loudly than it recently has in two flagrant miscarriages of justice. A brief comparison between the large percentage of the guilty who have the law executed against them in England and the small percentage in this country, tells the story.

How much longer can we afford to wait before our foreign policy becomes a fixed —instead of a floating—rib in the body politic?

All the necessary energies are within us, and we have a long life ahead of us in which to improve, if we take Robert Browning's horologe: "What comes to perfection perishes." A little less time in the market-place, and more in the court-house; a little less complacency; a little rubbing of the eyes to clear away the somnolence of habit; a concentration of our tremendous spiritual and monetary resources upon our own heathen; some rehabilitation of laws existing; some changes from state to federal responsibility (our motley divorce

laws are pure *opera-bouffe*); a standing back from and judging some of our legal fetishes — for instance, trial by jury, as we so signally maladminister it; a destroying of some of the old outgrown ideals of our Republic, and taking down and dusting tenderly certain others — and the man who cries, "The greatest nation on earth," need not defiantly add, "all the same!"

Long ago Henry Ward Beecher said, among several things, one worth considering: "American patriotism must be a household virtue." Somewhat diverting his manifest meaning (and disclaiming at once any predilection for the wearing of togas over petticoats!) may it not be asked, merely in the name of good housekeeping: If the men in this country are admittedly overworked by money-getting and family duties, civic duties, state duties, national duties (and some of their achievements do suggest fatigue!) why should not some of the women — well named our "leisure class" — lend them a hand?

It has looked of late as if the growing energies, and marked intelligence of some of our women, hungry for serious work, were about to find an outlet, — big with possibility, — not always in making new laws, but in bending their unquestioned strength toward seeing that those existent are not suffered to be buried alive. Several efforts in these directions have already borne good fruit: the suppression of unnecessary noise, the protection of children and dumb animals from man's cruelty; and several others, thus far less rewarded by well-deserved success. Enough, however, has been accomplished to show that our unusual women can do unusual work, and do it well enough to become the helpmates of many men, if not needing all their strength for one.

Improvement will not grow in the sands of complacency. "The conceit of progress . . . becomes a dangerous obstacle to its reality," has been wisely written of success.

BEHIND THE TIMES

BEHIND THE TIMES

"Time is the highest finite good in which all finite things are resolved." — Von Humboldt.

The key of life's harmonies changes with each generation; also the nomenclature. The Present carries, for a little, the melody (as did the Past in its day), presently to be lost in the oncoming flood of distant harmony set in another key — the key of the Future. The great *maestro* Time alone can turn it all into the endless melody that intertwines in growing intricacy as the centuries pass. And there is no discord; because what one generation calls cacophony the next recognizes and re-names — when it is seen that "all conspires to the utterance of manifold harmony."

What was called witchcraft yesterday, is to-day psychic phenomena; to-morrow it will be experimental science; and for aught

we know to the contrary it will be as familiar as plumbing in ages to come.

There is every indication that there will be several electric buttons on our library walls in about 2000 A. D.: one to summon one's aërial car for a spin on a fine windy morning; one for a five o'clock gossip with a fair friend in London; and a third, to turn on, toward eight o'clock, the overture of a *première* in St. Petersburg, or to learn of the *relâche* owing to the illness of her Excellency, the President's wife!

It makes no difference how steadfastly youth studies day and night the collated knowledge of his generation; nor how manhood hustles and elbows along the highways, — we are always behind the times, we, the great army of averages. But there are always intellectual scouts far out ahead of us, listening in the dark, and they alone hear strange new things, whisperings of which slowly come back to us, even when we are among the little children and the

women and the general impedimenta in the rear.

The writer remembers well when the first very superficial understanding of a great man's life-work, made of Darwin little more than that unspeakable thing in those days — an Atheist; written always with a capital, as was the Devil. We deny the latter personage to-day this honorific, perhaps because we fear him less; perhaps because we have discovered that his home is within our own souls, and are not honorifics reserved alone for the second and third person?

The "Index Librorum Prohibitorum" of 1564 put back the progress of civilization several centuries. The only Index of to-day is one's own measure of intelligence, and that does not put back the progress of civilization an hour, as happily to-day, in the life intellectual, if not in the life political, minorities rule.

There are always minds to whom seventy-and-five books out of every hundred are

forever forbidden by the rigid natural limitations of those minds themselves; there is no longer need of a Pope Pius IV.

There came a later day, in 1877, when we were told of the absurd claims of a certain American as to an invention he tentatively called a "phonograph." The funny papers of the day rejoiced and were exceeding glad and grateful, and their wits and artists waxed very industrious. The scientists, however, held their peace, and waited a little; and then came out of their laboratories and took the discoverer by the hand. And the small wits and artists retired; and they, in their turn, waited awhile, for art of that kind must be *au courant*, or find some other work to do.

On an overland trip coming from Japan in 1888, we were told to watch carefully while passing through Lima, Ohio, as that town had taken its life in its hands, so to speak, and was rashly experimenting with a partly understood power wherewith to run the street-cars, and the result was an

amazing thing called "a trolley." And heaven was kind to us, and all that trainful of watchers saw the horseless uncanny thing stop near the railway station, awaiting our passing. And there went with us on our way abundant food for talk for many hours.

Our grandparents in the year 1822 fought the introduction of gas, which began first to be manufactured in this country in that year, in the city of Boston; and there are many to-day who still mortally fear to receive into the family circle electricity.

Only one generation back of us fought sturdily against the introduction into our houses of hot and cold water. I remember hearing an old gentlewoman tell of the dare-devil courage of her lord, who, somewhere about 1854, sent her and the children to the seashore; and while they were there, secretly jeopardized his life—and that of their home—by having installed a kitchen boiler and a bath-tub, he meanwhile remaining in residence!

"It was a mercy he was spared," she

ended devoutly. Which indeed was a verity, as there were many rash experiments in those days with only partly comprehended forces. It is also probable that the gods are to-day holding their breath at our own daily hairbreadth escapes as we play or work with electricity, radium, X-rays, and other elements and forces doubtless existent but still hidden from us. For science often does its best work on a very narrow ledge, with death on either side.

There is much love, and also a great deal of pity, bridging the gaps between the three living generations. But one perfectly sympathizes only with one's own generation; is mentally *en rapport* only with one's own times.

A man tells a contemporary his thought, sure of his understanding; while he very seldom tells either his own father, or his own son. His father is apt to depreciate, his son either to overestimate, or also to depreciate; only one's friend appreciates justly. The consciousness of being over-

estimated is as demoralizing as the consciousness of being under-estimated. Both attitudes are bereft of peace and naturalness. For with his son a sensitive man is apt to tiptoe up to the required level of his offspring's ideal of him, or to sink down in silence to the level of his father's instinctively light estimate of him — saving his real self for those of his own generation.

Only when we can stand level with another, eye to eye, can there be real mental companionship, and that peace of soul that is "liberty in tranquillity."

In all these relationships between two minds, there is undoubtedly telepathic action and reaction, which we, in the Western world, are only beginning to recognize as a source of immense power.

It used to be a common saying that trust begets the right to be trusted, — grading the phenomenon as moral. Nowadays we know that such mental transmutations are brought about by psychic, not moral, laws. And a psychic law is moral,

only in its effect: in itself it has no inherent good or bad socialistic qualities, any more than carbonic acid gas, which does not fly to the floor for the benefit of men seated in chairs, but in response to law.

The labyrinth ahead of us in telepathy and suggestion alone; the coming cross-currents of moral responsibility; the barely acknowledged power for good or evil, which are among the demonstrated physical, and also ethical, effects of these esoteric forces, make one grateful for Nature's kindly way of telling her secrets to us very slowly, a few words at a time, with long pauses between.

Strangely enough, life, even in the midst of the present orgy of materialism, is becoming more and more governed by immaterial forces.

Bulk is known to be no longer the true measurement of atomic force. The mammoth catapults, or bombards, of the Middle Ages are replaced by a tiny electric current, placed at almost any level, which

starts and sends a thousand pounds of steel on a five-mile journey through the air, and drops it as exactly as if the *catapultier* of to-day were watching with his naked eyes the whole ballistic curve, from the muzzle of the great gun to the final scene of awful destruction.

The enormous radio-activity of radium is the latest half-comprehended secret escaped from Time's great storehouse, still packed full of awful mysteries.

The day of the horse as a draught animal has been superseded by that of a power invisible save in its phenomena. Wires now in turn have begun to be replaced by currents of air, so long unsuspected of any such potency. The whole tendency is toward the replacement of bulk by other energies, coming slowly to us through the centuries. The measurement in horse-power of the energies called electricity and nitro-glycerine, gives the cue to the immediate future.

It is not inconceivable that the time will

come when, in place of two opposing generals, our wars will be waged between two military Rosenthals seated ten miles apart, each busy with his own set of electric keys connected with the opposing batteries. Infantry, cavalry, dispensed with, and only an army of grave-diggers at hand to bury the slain artillerymen between the lines!

Cities will be battered down, just the same as in the old days, and the blood-letting and the money-letting will cool the temper of politicians, and Peace will finally come, clothed and in her right mind, and reign once more.

If a boy reads his Froissart and then turns to the siege of Port Arthur, he can feel the rapid current of human development rushing by like a mountain torrent. Jules Verne has turned, within twenty years, from a jester into a prophet; and even he is now left far "behind the times."

The "Arabian Nights" is no longer the compendium of the marvelous. There is nothing in it so startling as the revelations

of what we call modern science. If Scheherazade had had the telegraph, photography, steam, electricity, the phonograph, the telephone, to fall back upon conversationally, she need never have felt nervous of her tenure of life, at the hands of her husband, Sultan of India.

What is there in the one thousand and one tales to compare with wireless telegraphy? or with the humiliating exposure of a living man's skeleton to the more or less unsympathetic eye of his friend?

The miracles of long ago are the experiments in the physical sciences to-day; and perhaps in the future will be gathered together in a handy-book, like household recipes, or "First Aids to the Injured."

The Present always stands on the narrowest space there is for human footing. The Past and the Future encroach closely before and behind, and there is no turning round.

The French physician who to-day uses hypnotism in place of anæsthetics in the hospitals, and the American physician, of

undoubted probity and high standing, who uses psychic suggestion for moral cures, would both have been burned as malevolent wizards not so very long ago. To-day they stand for good, working in a half-light, but scientifically; claiming no more than demonstrable phenomena; humble always, because they see in it the mere alphabet of future socialistic science. They are the "medical missionaries" of the generations to come.

It almost seems as if objective religion, the objective aids to redemption of the past, were about to be replaced by the discovery that evil is to be controlled by a power entirely within us, adequate to the task, but hitherto unsuspected.

The subjective cures claimed by Christian Science owe most of their force to the fact that this is the exact age for the rooting of such subjective theories.

It is the age of the glorifying of individualism, introspection; the exact moment when we are discarding, one by one, visible

powers of all sorts, for the physico-invisible, and the occult.

Fifty years ago Eddyism would have been laughed quickly out of existence; fifty years hence what modicum of truth there is in it will have quite another nomenclature. A very ordinary woman has happened to plant her propaganda of half-truths at the exact psychologic moment best for its growth; just as "Uncle Tom's Cabin," a very ordinary novel, full also of half-truths, fell in soil ripe for it.

Some of the so-called great books of the world owe their reputation to a genius for timeliness. If a Bunyan began to-day to hunt for a publisher, he would pass through many a Slough of Despond before he found one.

Once started, the mere impetus of renown keeps them rolling on; as a successful writer finds a ready sale for his schoolboy compositions.

Every new discovery in science leaves the young people stimulated and eager; the middle-aged, doubting and slow to assimi-

late; the old, bewildered and inclined to feel too weary to catch up with the times. They know that they are too late, too tired out; they in their turn find that they assimilate not merely slowly, but no more! *The key has changed.* What was once harmony is now, to the old, jangling discord. Silence is the only music to ears that have heard too much.

The spiritual things are few which survive the funeral of a dead generation before the installation in full power of the next.

Truth, honesty, courage, are simple human qualities that withstand the assaults of time. Every experiment with them ends in the same way. They are as clear-cut as diamonds in form, and as indestructible. No sane person can be excused for confusion regarding them.

But there are very many minor moral, ethical, and artistic points left undecided in the last will and testament of a dead generation. Anything that comes under the head of emotion is so much a matter of tem-

perament and heredity that it does not so easily crystallize. The dominance and treatment of woman, for example, so different at different periods in the history of civilization, has not yet settled into any exact law, any exact code. Racial and national prejudices join with individual temperament and prevent the question of man's relations to woman from being very much more settled to-day than it was in the days of Moses. The injunction, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife," joined with that against the taking of his ox or his ass, has not been greatly improved upon to-day, except in form; save for the modern recognition of the fact that the ox and the ass have no volition in the matter, and it has come to be acknowledged that the wife has! So it comes to pass that, in this particular, a man does not find any very great fundamental differences between his grandfather's relations to women, his father's, and his own. It is as much a matter of temperament as it was with St. Paul.

In other matters the three generations are ages apart in both theory and practice. Apart in dress of a Sunday morning: the grandfather in his frock coat and silk hat, going to church ("for the example," he admits solemnly); the father in his sack-coat and derby, bound for his club; the son in his golf flannels or rubber coat, Prussian cap, and goggles, bent on the worship of Fresh Air and Exercise, to whom church and club are equally stuffy and "behind the times."

Nor can the same small library supply the three generations with reading. Grandfather still reads, and alas! still quotes, his Byron. He is steeped to his finger-tips with Lord Chesterfield if he likes people, and with Wordsworth if he likes Nature. He dearly loves to read aloud from his calf-bound volumes of Shakespeare, Lamb, and Shelley; and to read to himself from Fielding, Smollett, or Gil Blas. "Egad! has any one written anything since?" He cares mightily for the sounds of words, less for the sense. He has heard no singing worth

the name, since Giulia Grisi and Mario; seen no acting since Cushman and Ristori and Edwin Booth. The grandfather can have no serious conversation with his middle-ageds on either politics, religion, art, or literature, without furious argument. The former is so hopelessly behind the times! The latter is so shallow and flippant!

So the father surrounds himself with books and friends to his own liking. He has a library on the Civil War, and the biographies of the generals on both sides. He re-reads "The Newcomes" or "The Tale of Two Cities" when he wants a novel; Tennyson and Longfellow are his poets, Smiles and Hamerton his essayists. But of them all he prefers the books of the four great English scientists of the age. He seeks the men of his own taste in jokes, politics, and habits, at his clubs.

And the grandson in turn smiles down upon his father and grandfather alike, and speaks a different language from them both,

thinks different thoughts, reads different books, holds other ideals. He belongs in every fibre to his own time, and takes seriously only four things in life: work, health, modern science, and sport. He takes his automobile weeklies, reads his automobile novels; thrills to the scientific discoveries of last week in chemistry or aërial navigation. He reads no books older than Kipling, d'Annunzio, Beaudelaire, or Maeterlinck; and above all, he never quotes! If he does, it is good form to do so only in some such wise as this: "Seems to me that French chap — what's his name? — has got off some sing-song stuff about that. Can't for the life of me think of the fellow's words. It 's bully good stuff, just the same."

And grandfather rises and leaves the room, rigid with outraged taste, unspeakably repelled by such latter-day blasphemy. He and his grandson are as far apart as if one were born in London and the other in Timbuctoo; and the pathos lies in the fact that each would claim — London!

And the grandson slams out of the house; the old primal jealousy of his own day and generation gnawing at his heart, as it has done since men began to think and argue and improve on the first arrowhead. "Father is bad enough, in all conscience, with his Ristori, Patti, 'Semiramide,' 'Pickwick,' Shenandoah and Shiloh references; but when it comes to poor old grandfather and 'The Arts,' — whatever they may be, — there is nothing but speed, speed alone, that will clear a man's brain!"

The whole question of the arts is dead long ago, save alone architecture, which is only carpentry carried to its *n*th power! The Arts, indeed! To be sure there's Shaw with his topsy-turvyisms, and Pinero with his mechanisms, and Puccini with his syrupy lollipops; but thank the Powers! he himself has never seen Shakespeare, never read Dickens, and would rather die than sit through "The Ring"!

As for politics, of course he and his friends had long ago faced the fact that the

tendency of our Republic is toward centralization of power. The faintest whisper of a third term in Grant's day caused much more stir all over the land than the open and full discussion of it to-day. It represents only the newest political thought, no longer a national cataclysm. The young men have already assimilated the many possibilities therein embraced, and look with eager eyes and courageous hearts toward our future and the impending changes, which are as sure as breathing. So ponders the grandson on the way to his garage.

In religion the rapid changes are apparent to all. Not alone in the spirit but in the manifestation. The sectarian rocks of grandfather's day, upon which men so sorely cut themselves, have been slowly pulverized during the two generations which have followed his; and soon will be but part of the good arable earth, in which will grow many things for the good of humanity. The rabbi, the Catholic priest, the Presbyterian dominie, the Salvation

Army leader, will sit together in unity of spirit, and end their prayer, — "for Humanity's sake. Amen."

A Presbyterian minister recently solemnized the rites of matrimony dressed in a black silk gown, amd read the service from the Prayer Book of the Established Church of England. Conceive of the long string of vituperative adjectives that would have been aimed at him by the Selectmen of 1670! And the mighty fines imposed, the penalties, punishments, and restrictions — perhaps banishment itself!

As those peevish days are now behind the times, so shall to-day soon be. Without revolution, without legislation even, — just the inevitable imperceptible renewal and change of elements in our bodies which takes place every seven years, as long as the pulse of living throbs on; so it is with the generations as they file by.

Not many years ago, in Rome, a monseigneur of the Catholic Church, — having a supposed reason to think that a bit of

proselytism might not come amiss, — in reply to some such smiling protest as this: "If, Monseigneur, nothing else kept me out of your church, the *Index Expurgatorius* would. To be forty years old and told what I may or may not read!" said to the writer: —

"Ah, my dear madame, it is fortunate that we have accustomed ourselves to be misunderstood! The strength of the Church lies in its very flexibility and adaptability. We should never dream of dictating to you, however much we deem it wise to do so to Madame W——. She is but a child. She will always remain one. She will never learn to walk quite alone. She needs us."

"Did the strength of your church lie in its very adaptability in the time of Alexander Borgia?" came to the lips, but was stopped there. It was impossible, in face of that flattering accent, that perfect courtesy. They could be properly met only by a deprecating little smile — of triumph! He had admitted exactly what was wanted.

Even in the most conservative institution in the world to-day, there was that same note of progress, and of unescapable change, if it too would not fall hopelessly "behind the times." But there are few signs of that yet; the Church of Rome has always been governed by superior minds who see very far ahead, if purposely wearing the blinders of tradition wherewith to limit their width of vision.

The skirmish-fighting has begun in England between the State and the Established Church. The drawn battle is inevitably ahead. Our grandsons will be living when peace is declared, and the ground cleared for the new thoughts and the new nomenclature of a few old thoughts.

Not very many issues come to actual drawn battle, however. The smaller social and political questions left to a new generation by a former, are generally soon disposed of, or die out of themselves through neglect, in face of the host of larger issues crowding forward.

One generation considers lightning a direct chastening from the hand of a book-keeping Being of their imaginations, whose time is largely spent in fitting his punishments to our crimes. A later generation catches the terrible thing called lightning, tames it to human needs, and harnesses it to sundry human mechanisms built for power and speed.

That the next generation will do many more miracles with electricity is inevitable, — even besides cooking, washing, and ironing, which are already on trial. For we to-day generate it as deliberately as the old folks made soft-soap; and we are far from daring to place any limit to its utilitarian power.

The criticism of one generation by the two nearest is beneficial in the long run. From morals to manners, it makes for a safe brake on the one hand, and a whip on the other hand! The resultant speed is good, healthy and moderate.

Although an honest man or woman is

the same, world without end, the manners of one generation differ so from those of the one before, and of the one following after, that much misconception prevails.

Would our American grandmothers have applied the word "lady" — sacred in those days — to a fashionable young matron of to-day, with her youthful attire, her "assisted" complexion, her slang, her cocktails and cigarettes? What would grandmamma have to say — what *would n't* she? — at women riding astride, and playing bridge for money during half their waking hours, and their absolute independence of any power in heaven or on earth? Their studied repression of sentiment, even for their children, who are brought up on the New Thought theory, and have trained nurses who must be consulted before the dear soft little faces can be kissed or caressed.

However a man or a woman may struggle not to be left behind in the onward rush of the new generation, however they may so

force the note of gayety, and nimbleness of foot, however the woman may dye, and rouge, and wear collars broad to strangulation, or the man pad, and affect a rakish eye and anachronistic necktie — the world recognizes at a glance the last flare-up of a lamp when the oil is running low. And after a momentary admiration for so clever a *tour de force*, the struggle wins naught but smiling contempt.

A hundred things point to so thin a disguise. The best made-up and posed old fop on earth removes his hat instinctively, even in a public elevator, if a woman is in it, thereby placing him at once in his own generation. The most wondrously constructed *grande dame*, still in the running with the friskiest society matron, rises, instinctively, to greet another woman frankly no younger than she; and the world knows at once that she is hopelessly behind the times. They did those things in grandmother's day. Only the young girls dip their little curtseys to their female elders

nowadays — all else is "bad form" and behind the times.

But there is a very actual charm to middle age if all sense of being left behind is avoided by simply drifting on in the current of one's own generation, with its own manners, thoughts, clothes, and prejudices. Waist measure — and waist-coat alike — let go! Shoes and gloves comfortable at last, after years of tiresome compromise. The necessity of strenuous exercise palliated; the joy of sitting down openly confessed, albeit the joy of lying down be considered still very far ahead. Young people are once more attentive and courteous to one's gray hairs. Seats are offered in public places by well-bred men and maidens alike. The soreness of the fight with Time — always ending the same way — has passed off; the sadness of old age has not yet come.

It is the age of listening — the only one of the three. It is the time when one listens to the love stories of the young, — and

perhaps claims the right to scold a little,— as detached from it all as was the Sphinx herself lending a stony ear to men's distorted tales.

It is the short sunset-hour of life; and if one's vision be clear, it is the most beautiful part of the brief day of living. There comes a broad charity that has in it something of the divine spirit, that sees the errors of humanity, and yet everywhere cause for tenderness. Sees everywhere, not the things that men have done, but "the things that men would do." It contains admiration for a life well expended, and contains charity for a life ill expended, or unexpended — even if it be one's own.

And then, after a little, comes old age. Another age of talking, querulous of too much listening. And, too, a pathetic little new growth of vanity; and a vision shortened to the details of immediate environment. There are certain little equations between yesterday's humidity and one's rheumatism; or between to-day's dessert

and one's gout. Once more the love of life is curiously intensified, desperately clung to. The night is coming rapidly, but the old, however weary and heavily laden, fight against the hour for rest and sleep as do the little children, already cross for need of it, after the long day. This of the many; but of the few whose intellect lifts them above the touch of Time, there remains the beauty of the late autumn. The wonderful skeleton of trees is laid bare, no longer smothered in nature's millinery. For the bones of things have ever a beauty of their own — perhaps because in greater measure revealing Nature's marvelous plan and handicraft.

The peace, instead of the peevishness, of a clear unprejudiced intellect at the end of life is the only glimpse into heaven vouchsafed us. It has not come through mere abstemious living, for a sowing of negatives never yet produced much of a crop — religious teaching to the contrary, notwithstanding. Intellect is a gift, as is a great singing voice.

And so the grandfather may be the happiest of the three generations. Albeit his grandson may be listed among those "athletic brutes" (heroes of the day) down the hill in the college stadium; and his son be among the shouters on the grand stand. And he, the old man in his pillowed chair, is seated by an open window, watching while the lights are being put out one by one on the high altar of the West, after Vespers and Benediction, and before the old sacristan Death comes to lock up.

What matter now the old disputes with his son, and his son's son, about religion, science, art, literature, music? It is all but as the buzzing of bees, each full of his small task of filling his tiny waxen cell, down in the hot meadow-lands.

There is but one thing which keeps ever ahead of Time; which survives the revelations of Science; which was written across the sky of Yesterday, and is across the sky of To-day, and will be found there "when

the curtain of To-morrow rolls up"; and that is "the moral sentiment." For, as Emerson says, "That was older and awaited expectant these larger insights."

A FEW FALLACIES IN OUR EDUCATION

A FEW FALLACIES IN OUR EDUCATION

"That the age writes so much on education shows at once its absence and the feeling of its importance. Only lost things are cried about the streets." — RICHTER.

I

AMONG an American's many and sustaining self-satisfactions, our system of education is easily the most conspicuous.

Any word spoken in aught save laudation is, of necessity, but "the breeze of the fan pitted against the hurricane."

There would be much less to criticise in our school system if life were, in fact, what it is in the morbid (that is, not "sound and healthful") fancy of so many educational authorities. But life is not the refined pantomime the *doctrinaire* would have us think, played by a lot of bloodless, sexless, stom-

achless spirits, who live on shredded philosophy and predigested poetry!

Instead, life is made up of a terrific struggle for bread and meat; made up as a forest is, of unending battles for space and air and ever the push and scramble upwards towards the sunlight which is always there, above and about us — waiting; made up of experiments, disasters, blunders, explorations, big defeats, small successes; made up of knocking our heads against Nature's hard and fast laws, and so learning them — exactly as a child learns what meaneth the words "cold" and "hot"; and there is no other way to teach him, nor us.

Amidst all the uproar and clash of elements in the storm of daily living the one life-line to which we must cling or be lost is strength of character, — a strong rope of many twisted strands that is slow in the making.

What percentage of our education is devoted to the development of character? That question seems to the writer the fore-

most in any practical, sane discussion of this question.

We spend about $200,000,000 a year on public education, and character-development remains almost untouched, save in the most superficial way. To be sure, it is something to train a little street savage to plaster down his ruffled locks, give a watery dab at his hands and face, and say the inevitable, "Yes, ma'am," that is considered the corner-stone of social civilization in this country. One welcomes gladly any and all such reformations, however insignificant, and one teacher for sixty small savages can do little more. It is what is *not* done, that forms the glaring fault of our system.

A good definition of "character" is "impulse reined down into steady continuance." That a fine character must come, *can* only come, from a fine motive, has also been well said.

Whether it be that a given temperament leads to pedagogism, or that the life of teaching develops a given unavoidable

mental bias, certain it is that to an alarming degree education is left (particularly with our girls) in the hands of purists, to whom deep insight into life itself — not theoretical, not book life — is denied, and a certain crystalline sanity.

Boys and girls alike are taught that "education" (the cramming of a lot of unrelated knowledge) is an *end* in itself, instead of being but one of several *means* towards the development of useful living, — and that, and that alone, spells what all the world most longs for — happiness.

The development of character — which Smiles shrewdly says "is property" — is a much stronger lever towards that end than mere education, in its narrower sense. It is property too that grows in value as the years pass. It is not merely a personal asset, but an asset to the community at large.

Take, as we do in this country, the daughter of a washwoman, used to the moral and physical chaos of five in two rooms, and stuff her with all the "educa-

tion" in the cosmos, and it is safe to say that next to nothing of it all will bring any order out of that home chaos. Neither the analysis of Shakespeare's plays, nor geometry, nor dabblings in chemistry,—unrelated to the kitchen stove,—nor astronomy (for she gets no nearer the stars than the roof where the wash dances its endless *fandango*), will do any more than take that daughter out of those two awful rooms, leaving chaos behind her. That is the utmost, and it helps a little, to be sure, but in face of that enormous expenditure, not to the extent that it should and could be made to do—but for the theorists!

At the same time it develops and indorses selfishness in her, and a snobbishness as to her forbears, affectation as to her small learning. It helps neither her family nor the commonwealth as it might. Because first, her character remains largely untouched, and *even the impulse to work and help* them is not developed in her, which is the greatest error of all in the system;

and second, because what she has been taught is unrelated to the exigencies of her daily life, and of little use to any one connected with it.

Take another example from a different social plane: Is there nothing wrong when our girl college graduate returns home, brimming with "education," only about one-tenth of which she ever makes the least use of (and nowadays with the handwriting of an uneducated mechanic, so that one's old-fashioned sensibilities shrink before it)? She leaves her *denatured* life at college with its fundamentally false values of reality, and returns — entirely helpless — to face the true value of life's realities. Like the washwoman's daughter, to make any use of her acquired knowledge, she must leave her home and shirk her most obvious immediate home duties.

There is something wrong about those four self-centred, *raffiné* years spent with a score of book-learned spinsters who generally consider the education they impart

as an end ; who all alike look at life through their fingers — that fifty-odd years of actual living ahead of their pupils, after those paltry four have passed and been forgotten.

Is there nothing wrong with the system when this college graduate returns to her home, and finds her father white, silent, and grim with overwork, and nothing of all her mathematical studies, her logic, her fund of "higher" education, can lift one pennyweight of work from his drooping shoulders? She finds her mother overburdened with household or social cares, and aging before her time, and nothing in that utterly false college atmosphere has equipped the daughter in any one particular (save that of hasty bed-making) to turn to and help, and so bring back the smile to the dear worn face. Her sister is ill ; has any of her expensive training fitted that graduate to save the heavy expense of a trained nurse?

And this we call "higher" education! Is n't it perhaps one or two stories "higher" than the plane of sanity? Certainly it is

above what Stedman calls "the intestinal thick of life."

The young woman's learning has been almost purely academic and receptive, as a woman's generally is. It is again entirely unrelated, in almost every particular, to any condition of actual life, save that of a capacity for passing on her faulty knowledge to others — penmanship and all!

And that means once again, as in the case of the working-class girl, *going out of the home* a free woman, and leaving it unsuccored, unrelieved of one single burden. For when a girl supports herself away from her home, it is well known that that is generally all that she does, all that has come to be expected of her. Above all it develops more and more in our women the national curse of feminine individualism; and slowly atrophies the much needed feminine instinct of communism, which alone can save us socially.

Our boy graduate is decorated with a scientific degree, and yet we are compelled

to send a glass of water to the nearest chemist to be analyzed, for the protection of the household. He has spent a year or so studying electricity, and do we not send for an electrician when the connection between an electric lamp and the feed wire is burned out?

So, many a study in that showy college curriculum, which so took our fancy, will crumble in the same way before the test of ordinary every-day practical life. Why, then, go to the expense of it? Why do we not make that practical test the one genuinely solid basis upon which to build up our children's education? We are not dealing in this young country of ours with a duke's sons and daughters who are in a position to play with pretty little educational and socialistic theories if they choose. We have to do with something like 60,000,000 of people grappling with the question of food and shelter; grappling also with not only our own ignorance, but that of about 720,–874 immigrants a year, for the past ten years, from Europe and Asia.

That, under our present educational system, we reached some time ago the point of non-assimilation of that vast horde, is obvious to even the most optimistic. Our present public-school system is largely responsible for this growing indigestion.

If, in place of that academic and pretentious system, one half of that $200,000,000 was spent in the mere duplications of the various forms of "social service" already started, the outlook would be less gloomy, leaving the higher and special education to those who really want it.

More and more industrial schools; classes in manual work of every description; more night schools (for those pupils are always in earnest); leagues for political education; more "settlements" established; more working girls' societies; travelers' aid work; more recreation piers, and school gardens, and playgrounds, and parks and Sunday afternoon music for the poor in our great cities, and cut out the "Analysis of Shakespeare's Plays"! Then perhaps the

gods will see that sanity has at last come to our republic, and they will fight with us. Yale has at last given twenty-seven electives in commercial methods in the graduate school, — a most encouraging sign.

To this list let us add some form of the Pestalozzi-Fröbel movement, similar to that of "Sesame House," London. It is simply the Kindergarten developed into the "home" school, which Fröbel hoped to see some day part of every girl's "higher" education, whether she had to support herself as a nurse, or whether the training was to be applied to her own children. In either case the nation is the gainer. We are much behind both Germany and England in the adoption of this phase of advanced Kindergarten. Many people even think that Fröbel's work stopped with the children; instead of which he really began with the adults, and only later on saw the necessity of beginning with the children, in his splendid work of "eliminating the haphazard from education."

II

Religion is beginning to fumble with its cuff-links preparatory to rolling up its shirt-sleeves, doffing its mediæval vestments, and getting down among the people at last, and becoming the living factor in human life; that is, after all, the real test of any thing's right to exist, even the right of a religion.

Education must do the same. Already men and women have seen what must come, if our republic is to succeed; and they have begun to act upon that insight. But there is hard fighting to be done, before the pedagogues and theorists are finally downed.

There have also been times when the wresting from home churches certain funds destined for foreign missions has highly recommended itself. But time will inevitably solve that, as our national complacence recedes. After all, it is only a question of back-yards; whether it is our highest duty to keep our own clean or that of our next-door neighbor.

As an example of the way education has fallen into conventions we have but to study the slow petrifaction through many generations of the Tree of Knowledge in certain classic places in England, where William Paley's "View of the Evidences of Christianity" has held its place in the curriculum of Cambridge University all through the life-work of such mental giants as Darwin, Spencer, Huxley, and Tyndall. Only three years ago it would have been a sacrilege even to suggest the dropping of that archaic archdeacon's writings from the Cambridge Examinations.

Within less time than that, Oxford has been awakened by an outside force, to the necessity for more original, productive work and less passive receptive work,— Oxford (the mother of modern educational convention), which some five years ago gave the writer a far greater sense of the flight of time than ever did the Temple of Pæstum! So signs of disintegration, even in that educational Gibraltar, are not wanting,

and disintegrated rock is not a bad fertilizer.

Our colleges have, to be sure, long ago dispensed with Paley, but there remain numerous other excisions that the slow knife of Time alone can successfully make for us.

The old claim that all this preliminary education is necessary to develop the mental muscles of our young people does not stand the briefest analysis. Is it any more "developing" to make cake than to make bread? The old ideas about the necessity for the most extraordinary mental gymnastics, "memory-aids, etc." (practiced in England well within our time), are passing rapidly away. As preëminently sane a pedagogue as Gordy even openly questions the usefulness of the excessive stress laid on higher mathematics in the United States, to "strengthen" the growing mind.

It is no longer the sacred ivory ring upon which our nation does its mental teething. That idea did very well in the days when electricity meant little more than a thunder-

storm; when "a course" in chemistry in many a school was easily accomplished in "six weeks"; when Africa was a large yellow blank on our maps, beloved by the slothful scholar beyond all other countries on the globe.

Saadi says: "Whosoever acquires knowledge and does not practice it, resembleth him who ploughed, but did not sow."

At the present day one of the most important questions before us is how to reduce the ever lengthening chain of education dragged along by our feverish over-burdened school-children, galley-slaves to a Theory! The recent enormous strides in chemistry, electricity, physics, in fact all forms of any useful knowledge, must be made room for by eliminating a lot of useless information hitherto thought necessity to the "strengthening" of young minds.

Nature is "loving" only to the poets, whose sole outlook is through skylights at the tree-tops and the stars. To those of us who walk soberly along the ground with

eyes on the level of the endless warfare of the streets, Nature is known forever to bring life into the world, and forever to slay it; known to fight man, to lay traps for him, to laugh at him, to hide her most useful secrets from him.

Merely to outwit Nature, to master the well-kept secret of her germs, and the better kept secret of her toxins, abundant education is necessary, logically related to human needs, which may be trusted to replace the unrelated knowledge crammed into our protesting young people.

A noted historian and pedagogue has recently written: "The education that neglects to emphasize frugality, perseverance, honesty, reliability, consideration, uprightness, for the sake of a purely intellectual training because of the supposed necessity of the latter to the earning of a livelihood, is a cruel mistake, an almost criminal blunder." The only exception the present writer would take to this is with the word "almost."

III

THE open and confessed ideas upon which our whole public-school system is laid are largely fallacious. First: it raises the level of the whole people. Second: one of our most cherished Tartuffisms is that the all-too-easy possession of papers of American citizenship gives a man's children by an "inalienable right" (words to conjure with amongst us!) a smattering of—algebra; whereas that privilege, not in the least an "inalienable right," should only be accorded to a public-school pupil who has proved that higher mathematics is an impelling necessity of his very being, and then he will value it the more if he pays a small fee for it.

But people are beginning to see clearly, here and there. Professor Peck writes: "There is probably no principle so fundamentally untrue as this [that education in itself and for all human beings is a good

and thoroughly desirable possession], and there is certainly none that is fraught with *so much social and political peril for the future.*" The italics are not his.

The level is raised, to be sure, but also the level of national snobbishness, certainly a very curious trait — considering our origin — this strong disrelish for manual labor, found alike in our men and our women! Or is it perhaps because of our origin?

Our men dislike and scorn agricultural work, and the Eastern farms are bleak and bear nothing of the fruits of the earth; and in the far West there are miles of fruit rotting every summer for lack of hands to pluck and pack it for transportation.

The young women refuse outright with scorn housework as a means to a living. They dislike even their own, in their own small houses. These prejudices, undoubtedly bred in us by our faulty public-school system, are at the bottom of many of our gravest social and civic questions: the servant question, the crowding into cities, the

lack of courtesy that is the all-pervading social disease in American civilization. This, among several of our fundamental American fallacies, — the "good-as-you," among others, — is bearing the fruit that both domestic and foreign seers predicted of us long ago.

"Strange that after all the centuries since Plato wrote his 'Republic,' and Aristotle his 'Politics,' the world should still need to be told that the honorable life is the life of labor."

Our whole public educational system strains away from manual work, and so debases it in the eyes of the whole young nation, which crowds into huge cities waiting for work that they have been inferentially taught is alone worthy of them, and their newly discovered Equality, their imposing educational equipment. How much better, saner, to "equip them for earning a living, as well as dignify their labor, and make it respectable in their own eyes."

There are not many greater follies in the

world to-day than the fallacy that forces the confusion of a mass of far less than half-digested matter upon a million of mediocre children, lest out of that million a Hawthorne, a Webster, a Marshall be lost to the nation.

The truth being that, given health and a few rudiments of learning, there is no power on earth but death that could have stopped any one of those men from achieving his precise destiny. For no amount of education will develop a specialized talent. That, no one can impart to us; it is as evasive as gas. It is rooted in the individual soul. No teacher ever seeded in any man a talent, or even a predilection.

Nor will any number of books stuffed into a million or two of bewildered children ever produce a Joseph Story, a Joseph Le Conte, or a John Burroughs — to keep to our American samplars.

We Americans, on the contrary, have ever beside us living examples of the truth of the reverse of this: presidents of enor-

mous railway systems who began as brakemen; bankers who first emptied scrap-baskets; all of them hammering out success with their own strong character and native intelligence, with precious little time, from the beginning, for even the "three R's."

In fact, the strongest individual human forces that our nation has so far known have, with a few conspicuous exceptions, managed rather to escape from the demoralization of our over-schooling with their pristine strength untapped.

Is it claiming too much to suggest that this enforced cramming of purely receptive education may have so sapped the physical strength, or so bent the natural mental bias, that some embryo naturalist, some natural jurist, or financier, or statesman, has fallen by the way, and his talent been lost to his generation?

So he have in him the germ of greatness, a man will cut his way through solid granite to achieve his object, without all that "edu-

cation " ; as love for an idea, as well as for a woman, always has managed to do.

The really earnest pupil who is forced to pay something for his tuition beyond the mere primary, or, at most, grammar grade, if he have any special talent for anything, will always find the necessary fee by hook or by crook — otherwise the world is in no great need of his talent.

Two examples have come under the writer's personal observation. First, a butcher's boy, stained apron and all, sat down with his overflowing meat-basket beside me one summer morning, in an open street-car. No sooner was the basket settled, than out he whipped a tattered, blood-stained book and plunged into it, almost passionately. A sideways glance divulged — a Latin grammar ! Not to ask a few questions, premised by an apology for wasting his precious time, was an impossibility. Being sincerely sympathetic, he replied readily : —

" I 've only had two full terms at the

night school, and I 'm trying to keep up with the class. Father died when I was a little chap, and I had to go to work. My boss can't afford to have but one delivery wagon, so that 's my job — that and cleaning up, and sawdusting our place. It costs a lot to deliver on the street-cars, but I 'll make it pay some day! No, I don't know just why I like Latin, ma'am," he went on in reply to a question. "P'raps it 's because I 'm used to getting down to the bones, you see, and I read somewhere that it 's the bones of our language. A feller ought to know about the bones of things, seems to me." The young, rosy, rather dirty face full of enthusiasm, intelligence, and smiling determination has lingered all these years. One's hand went instinctively to the pocket to help out that pathetic carfare; but it was withdrawn with a silent apology. To weaken by one fibre that fine, dignified spirit would be very far removed from true philanthropy, however pleasurable to one's self.

The other case was a poor boy of the people living in the country. He persistently "played hookey," but was always, significantly enough, alone. He spent his stolen time on the shores of a northern lake digging for arrowheads. He was looked upon as a born vagrant, and more or less of a simpleton, but one day he found a listener beside his lake, and before his early death he was one of the leading authorities upon the art, customs, and religion of the Zuñi Indians, and he did some inspired and very valuable work, and died full of honors. He loved his subject and a path was found leading to it, through an inconceivably adverse environment.

Plato, in his noted philosophical dream, made it the duty of his disciples ("whom he endowed with a very convenient clairvoyance") to uplift only those children of the lower class who possessed unusual abilities, and give to them, and to them only, "the education of the aristocracy." The modern growth of individualism has placed

that burden upon the children themselves; and so the state is put to the enormous and unwise expense of giving the education "of the aristocracy" to millions of American children in the hope that here and there the "owners of possible abilities" may be reached. Whereas, rich or poor, he may be trusted to hack his way to success, if there is aught within him that is destined to be of any real use to the world.

Professor Gordy says: "Poverty is due to moral, rather than intellectual causes. . . . The poorest people are not poor because of a lack of knowledge of the 'three R's.' They are poor because they are lacking in self-respect, thrift, perseverance, and reliability." One's thoughts fly back to that brave butcher-boy! A long stay in foreign lands followed so closely upon that incident, that touch was lost, but one feels absolutely assured that if he lives he is not now "delivering" for a petty butcher.

IV

Not until the free-education fever in this country has gone down to normal (as it must if we are to continue to exist under present political conditions), and the studies unrelated to practical, honest, healthy living are cut out of our public-school curriculum, shall we begin to build slowly and strongly from the ground up. All study beyond that should be paid for.

The present unsound system is responsible for several conditions, political, social, and industrial.

I. It has bred in the nation discontent and unrest, in which lie imbedded the seeds of anarchy and revolution, the diagnostic symptom being that no number of concessions appeases it.

II. It has led to an industrial superficiality in all kinds of work, professional as well as manual. Talk to the first intelligent middle-aged foreign born and bred me-

chanic who crosses your path, and learn of the vast difference in required preparation for work between our country and the industrial European countries. Six years' apprenticeship is required in England before the honorable title of "carpenter" is earned. Two years of slap-dash experiments on the long-suffering public generally suffice with us — and up goes his shingle!

An English carpenter said to the writer not long ago, in response to much questioning: "But you see, m'm, with us in England it's the soundness of the work w'ich counts; w'ile over 'ere it's the 'urry w'ich counts, m'm."

And is n't it the "'urry" that counts in education in the United States, in our desire to turn quickly in one generation the great mass of inpouring ignorant immigrants into what is glibly called "useful citizens"?

Whatever can be done in that line, can be accomplished in the primary and grammar schools, — a balanced, low-grade edu-

cation; a few subjects taught simply, and easily digestible, and the monetary balance spent in manual schools of every conceivable description, that the men and women, native or foreign, who must work with their hands, or starve or steal, are taught to do so in their youth.

In the meanwhile the incessant educational experiments go on. The advocates of an Elective system, the advocates of Will in Education, the disciples of Automatism, or of Parallelism; the arguments in favor of Rousseau and Herbert on one hand, and of Carpenter and Hinsdale on the other, go on their noisy way, until pupils and parents are alike left bewildered and groping in growing darkness.

No wonder the law of compulsion must be resorted to, to force the acceptance of so illogical an education upon a reluctant public! Would there be any need of such a law if the education bore directly upon the vital needs of that public?

It has been well said: "The end of

education may be provisionally stated as preparation for rational living." Can it honestly be claimed that more than a third of our encumbered grammar and high-school system is needed to help in achieving that end?

Give free only the educational fundamentals, and exactly the same to all boys and girls throughout the land. Selective work should be left to the manual school (or the professional and scientific schools if there be enough force in the pupil to carry him thus far), for a child's judgment as to selective educational work is worth no more than his parents'—both are equally fallacious. Nine youngsters out of ten intend to run stables, or nowadays to be chauffeurs when they grow up; the girls' fancy takes another direction, but along parallel professional levels. Suppose these early predilections had been taken seriously! Every child goes through a score of fleeting mental passions before he settles down to his life-work.

III. An old soldier starts into battle lightly equipped. Experience has always proved that the first equipment of an untried army is quadruple its real need, and it always becomes less and less as the campaign proceeds.

The small soldiers of our young nation are much too heavily equipped. A little sound primary education free to the public, and the "property" of character well strapped on, and give them the order to march!

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